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THE

HISTORY

OF THE

REIGN OF GEORGE III.

VOL. IV.

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THE

HISTORY

OF THE

REIGN OF GEORGE III.

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED,

A VIEW OF THE PROGRESSIVE IMPROVEMENT OF ENGLAND,

IN PROSPERITY AND STRENGTH,

TO

THE ACCESSION OF HIS MAJESTY.

By ROBERT BISSET, LL.D.

AUTHOR OF THE LIFE OF BURKE, &c. &c.

37276

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COMPLETED TO THE DEATH OF THE KING.

IN SIX VOLUMES.

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HISTORY

OF THE

REIGN OF GEORGE III.

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Meeting of parliament.—Unanimous approbation of the conduct of ministry respecting Holland.—Bishop of Landaff's speech on British interference in continental affairs.—Subsidiary treaty with the landgrave of Hesse Cassel.—Plan for the defence of the West Indies.—Complaints of a partial promotion of flag officers.—Ministers contend that the complaint is unfounded.—Declaratory law for explaining certain parts of Mr. Pitt's East India bill.—Origin of the doubts from which this measure proceeded.—Regiments ordered by government to India, to be paid and subsisted at the expense of the company.—Question by Mr. Pitt's bill; had government that power? denied by the directors and by opposition in parliament.—Arguments for and against.—Passed into a law.—Extension of the mutiny bill.—Bill against the smuggled exportation of wool—passed into a law.—Commencement of an inquiry concerning negro slavery.—State of facts.—General and special objections to negro slavery.—Impugned as contrary to Christianity, as well as justice and humanity.—Pious and benevolent enthusiasm in favour of the negroes.—Mr. Wilberforce—character, talents, and laudable zeal—opposite arguments.—Slavery an evil, great or small according to the sentiments and circumstances of the sufferers.—The condition of the African negroes is meliorated by becoming slaves to British masters.—Slaves in our plantations generally happy.—If Britain abolish slavery,

other European states will enjoy the benefits.—Great capitals are embarked on the public faith guaranteeing this trade.—An ample source of private opulence, and public revenue.—Petitions for and against the abolition of the slave-trade.—The privy council institutes an inquiry into the details and alleged cruelties of the slave-trade.—Sir William Dolben's motion for regulating the transportation of negroes—passed into a law.—Mr. Pitt's bill for the relief and recompence of the American loyalists.—Commencement of Hastings's trial.—Speech of Mr. Burke.—Motion for the impeachment of sir Elijah Impey—negatived.—Mr. Grenville's bill for improving his father's law respecting contested elections.—Supplies.—Flourishing state of commerce and finance.

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1787. Meeting of Parliament.

PARLIAMENT assembled on the 27th of November; and his majesty's speech exhibited to the houses an outline of the policy which he had adopted concerning Holland. He had endeavoured by his good offices to restore tranquillity between the contending parties, but found his efforts unavailing: he also discovered a desire of forcible interference on the part of France; he expressed to his Christian majesty his determination to counteract any such intention, and had armed for that purpose; but the success of the Prussian troops had re-established the lawful government in Holland; an explanation had taken place between his majesty and the king of France, which had terminated amicably, and both parties had agreed to disarm. The necessary preparations had produced extraordinary expenses, for which he doubted not his faithful commons would provide, and also adopt proper means for the defence of his distant dominions. He rejoiced at the flourishing state of commerce and the revenue, and the zeal and unanimity which his subjects demonstrated during the late expectation of war. From the dispositions which were then manifested, in any future emergency, he should depend on a promptness and vigour

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of exertion, proportionate to the exigence by which it might be required.

1787.

Unanimous approbation of the conduct of ministry respecting Holland.

THE conduct of Mr. Pitt respecting Holland was extremely popular among all parties throughout the kingdom; and in both houses it experienced the same unanimous commendation. Mr. Fox, Mr. Burke, and Mr. Sheridan, perfectly coincided with Mr. Pitt and his friends in the general principle of interference in continental affairs to preserve the balance of Europe. In the house of peers the bishop of Landaff, in justifying the principle, adduced reasoning at once appropriate to that specific case, and generalizing the constituents of wise and just interposition in any future circumstances. "Upon what ground (he said) did he approve of our late interference? on the ground of SELF-PRESERVATION. *If France had gained Holland, the security of Britain would have been endangered:* when it is said that Holland and the other states of Europe are independent states, the proposition is true only on a certain consideration, for they all depend one upon another, like the links of a chain; and it is the business of each to watch every other, lest any one become so weighty and powerful as to endanger the security or political importance of the rest."

Bishop of Landaff's view of British interference in continental affairs.

DURING the preparations, a subsidiary treaty had been concluded with the landgrave of Hesse Cassel; by which that prince was to receive 36,093*l.* to hold twelve thousand troops ready to be employed by Britain when their services should be required. This treaty was part of a general system, which it was then deemed premature to detail: the motion passed without a division. On the 10th of December an augmentation of the army was proposed, for the purpose recommended by his majesty's speech, of strengthening our distant possessions. On particular inquiry into the state of defence of our western settlements, ministers had found the force

Subsidiary treaty with the landgrave of Hesse Cassel.

Plan for the defence of the West Indies.

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force to be inadequate; this opinion had been confirmed by the reports of the officers commanding in the West Indies, who had been severally consulted upon the troops which each thought requisite for the security of the island he commanded. It was objected by some members of opposition, that the opinions of our commanders abroad did not afford satisfactory grounds for increasing our present establishments. It was obvious, that each of these officers would demand as large a force as he thought adequate to the defence of his own particular situation, and would govern himself in such requisition, merely by a regard to his own responsibility; whereas in judging of an adequate peace establishment for all the possessions of Britain, the whole would depend on a general view of its parts, and their relative exigencies; by the present motion the house was called on to vote an increase of the army without sufficient grounds. It was replied, that the opinion of the officers had not been asked on the whole force requisite for the defence of the West Indies, but that undoubtedly in forming plans concerning remote objects, men must proceed on information, and in seeking information must have recourse to those by whom it can be best afforded; officers who had been on the spot were certainly competent to state the separate facts, on the joint result of which ministers formed their inferences. The West India islands were, without doubt, objects of the highest importance to Britain. For their secure defence, three modes might be mentioned: first, a great stationary fleet: secondly, succours might be sent on the prospect of a rupture; or thirdly, such a military force as would prevent a surprise. The experience of last war proved that a fleet could not solely defend these possessions; since some of the islands had been wrested from us, when our naval strength was equal to the strength of the enemy: respecting the second means, it might

might be unsafe to detach any part of our army or navy from Europe; and though there should be no danger in the attempt, the succours might not arrive in time to prevent mischief; therefore the most eligible mode was to have a sufficient military force upon the respective islands to secure them from surprise; since, from the dispersion and distance of the islands, and the peculiarities of that climate, winds, and currents, it would sometimes be absolutely impossible for a fleet to afford that speedy relief which the occasion might require.

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1788. Complaint of a partial promotion of flag-officers.

AFTER the recess, one of the first subjects of discussion before the commons was a recent promotion of flag-officers during the preparations for war. Sixteen captains had been promoted to the flag, and about forty passed over. This partial promotion had greatly displeased the officers whom it omitted. They brought forward their complaint in the house of peers, under the patronage of lord Rawdon, who moved for the presentment of an address to the king; praying, that he would be graciously pleased to take into his royal consideration the services of such captains of his majesty's navy, as were passed over in the last promotion. Lord Howe, first commissioner of the admiralty, endeavoured to justify the conduct of the board; to execute beneficially the functions of their office, the lords of the admiralty must employ their own judgment and discretion in delegating an important trust: unless they were invested with the privilege of selection, they certainly could not undertake the burden of responsibility. His lordship could not state in a public assembly the particular grounds on which he had formed his judgment; there might be several reasons for not promoting captains to be admirals, without impeaching the character of the officers in question. The same persons might be fit for a subordinate employment, without being qualified for a higher trust; officers who had served

Ministers contend that the complaint is unfounded.

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ably and meritoriously all their lives, might not appear proper to be entrusted with the care of a fleet. So important a charge ought to be committed to men, not only of firm minds, but of such bodily strength as would enable them to endure the fatigues of the hard service which they might have to sustain. The executive government must have the choice of its own officers in the various degrees and kinds of service, otherwise it cannot be responsible for the effectual discharge of its duties. On these grounds the motion was rejected by the lords: in the commons a similar proposition was brought forward and supported by greater particularity of detail, in order to illustrate individual hardships; but as the general principle was the same, the proposed address was negatived, though by a small majority. It was afterwards moved, that the arbitrary powers which were claimed by the admiralty, having in some degree received the sanction of the house, to prevent the mischievous consequences which might ensue, they should adopt, as a rule of service, some permanent principle, to which officers might trust; and a motion was made, that it is highly injurious to the navy to set aside from promotion to flags, meritorious officers of approved service, who are not precluded by the orders of his majesty in council. Ministers objected to the proposition as unnecessary; and it was negatived.

Declaratory bill for explaining Mr. Pitt's East India law.

Origin of the doubts from which this measure proceeded.

Regiments ordered by

THE most important measure of this session, was a bill introduced by Mr. Pitt to explain doubts which had arisen concerning a part of the law of 1784, for the administration of British India. During the apprehensions of a rupture with France, government had formed a resolution of sending out four additional regiments to India, on board the company's ships, for the protection of our possessions in that quarter; and the proposition had been received with general approbation by the court of directors.

directors. Though apprehensions of war were dissipated, yet government was anxious for the security of distant possessions, and for that purpose proposed a permanent establishment of his majesty's troops in India; on these grounds they adhered to the determination of sending the soldiers. A question had arisen between the directors and the board of control, concerning the expense of their conveyance, their future pay and subsistence. By an act which passed in the year 1781, it was stipulated, that the company should be bound to pay for such troops only, as were sent to India upon their requisition; and upon this act the directors had refused to charge the company with the expense of the forces now about to be sent. The board of control contended, that they were invested with a power of ordering the conveyance of such troops as circumstances might require; and that if the directors refused, the expense should be defrayed out of the revenues which arose from their territorial possessions. The court of directors took the advice of several eminent lawyers, who concurred in their opinion. Mr. Pitt, impressed with the contrary idea, proposed to bring in a bill for removing the doubts in question, by declaring the intention of the legislature in the act of 1784, to have been agreeable to the construction put upon it by administration. By the law of 1784 he contended, every power, which before that time was entrusted to the court of directors for administering the territorial possessions, was by that act vested in the board of control. Those commissioners had the sole direction of the military and political concerns, the collection and management of territorial revenue. His object had been to leave to the corporate proprietors, and their representatives, the direction of those commercial concerns for which their charter had been granted, but to take into the hands of the executive government terri-

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government to India, to be paid and subsisted at the expense of the company.

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torial affairs; under the political department was evidently to be classed, the disposal of troops, and the provisions for their maintenance. As doubts were entertained and sanctioned by legal authority highly respectable, he proposed an act declaring the meaning of the law. This motion was controverted, first, on general grounds: legislature ought never to have recourse to this expedient, except when either the wording of an act was evidently so ambiguous as to stand in need of explanation, or where, in consequence of the clashing judgment of courts, or doubts expressed by judges from the bench, it became necessary for the legislature to propound anew its own meaning. In all other cases, parliament by interfering would quit its legislative, and assume a judicial capacity; and in the present instance would decide in a cause, in which it was in some respects interested as a party; since it would gain by its own decision. It was a dispute between the crown or the public, and a corporation, on a pecuniary claim. The king insists upon a certain sum of money from the company, for a specified object. The company admit a sum to be due, but not the amount demanded: here is a clear and simple question, on which an issue might be tried in a court of law. The measure proposed was liable to many serious political objections, and might be used as a precedent for the worst purposes. A minister has nothing to do but to propose, and bring in a bill for granting new powers, in doubtful and ambiguous words, under restraints indistinctly defined, and with clauses that have a double aspect. The company had been induced to consent to the act of 1784, upon pretences, which now proved to be delusive; and the minister, having obtained that consent, was resolved to put his own construction upon it, contrary to the original intention of the party concerned. In the farther

Question; Had government by Mr. Pitt's law that power? denied by the directors and opposition in parliament.

progress

progress of the bill, counsel was heard for the India company at the bar of the house, and the whole ability of opposition was exerted to prevent its enactment.

Arguments against the declaratory bill.

THE following was the substance of the arguments, legal and political, which were employed on each side. Its opponents controverted it principally upon two grounds: first, that the construction attempted to be put upon the act of 1784, was not its true and just construction: and secondly, that if it admitted such interpretation, the powers it vested in the board of control were injurious to the rights and interests of the company, and of a dangerous political nature, and therefore ought not to be confirmed. To prove the former proposition, its supporters contended, that the charter granted to the company having been purchased for a valuable consideration, every statute that diminished their rights ought to be construed, like penal laws, in the mildest sense, and so as to infringe those privileges in the least possible degree; and in ambiguous cases, acts of parliament should be explained in such a sense as to be consistent with each other. In the act of 1781[a] it was expressly stipulated, that the company should defray the expense of no troops, but such as were sent to India upon their own requisition; therefore the acts of 1784 should be interpreted so as to coincide with the preceding law. But the best and safest mode of expounding a statute, was to illustrate one part of it by other clauses of the same act. By the law of 1784[b], "the commissioners (it was admitted) are authorised and empowered from time to time, to superintend, direct, and control all acts, operations, and concerns, which in anywise relate to the civil or military government, or revenues of the territorial possessions of the company,

[a] See act of parliament, 1781, respecting India.
[b] See act for the government of India, July, 1784.

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in the manner in the said act directed:" and "the court of directors are required to pay obedience to, and to be governed and bound by, such orders and directions as the said court shall receive from the said board." Were these clauses taken solely, it was allowed that they would justify the construction which was intended by the declaratory act; but from subsequent passages it was argued, that the positive directorial power of the commissioners was restrained to definite circumstances, and to be exercised on specified omissions of the East India directors. The directors by the act were required to deliver to the commissioners copies of all dispatches which were received from their servants in India, and all instructions proposed to be sent to the company's officers in that country: these the commissioners, within fourteen days, were to return to the directors, either approved or disapproved and amended; and the directors were bound to obey the orders so amended or altered. If within fourteen days the court of directors should neglect to yield the obedience commanded by the act, then, and then only, the commissioners might originate instructions. If the Board were invested with the positive power claimed by the declaratory act, it was absurd to specify certain cases in which it might be lawful for them to send orders and instructions to the company's servants in India without the consent of the company. It was evident, from the whole tenor of the clauses, taken together, that the authority vested in the commissioners was no other than a superintendency and control over the transactions of the company in their management of their affairs in India; a power to alter and amend their orders and instructions, and, in case of neglect in the directors, to carry such orders so amended into execution; but not to originate measures, in opposition to the chartered and stipulated right of the company. It was farther contended,

tended, that the directors had understood the power proposed to be conferred by Mr. Pitt's bill on the commissioners, to be subject to the alleged limitations; and that even the minister had expressly declared his coincidence in that construction; that otherwise the directors would have opposed it as no less hostile to the rights of the company, than the obnoxious bill of Mr. Fox.[c] The board of control itself had not understood the act of 1784, as investing them with the unlimited sway which they now claimed; they had acted upon the statute of 1781 for upwards of two years after the law of 1784, and by their conduct admitted that they had no power to send out any of his majesty's troops to India without the consent of the company. From the general rules of interpretation, from the clauses and tenor of the act in question, the opinions of those whom it first affected, the declaration of its framer, and the construction of the persons who were appointed to carry it into execution, members of opposition endeavoured to prove, that the power now proposed to be declared did not arise from it as a law.[d]

They next objected to it as a measure of policy: the authority which was claimed annihilated the court of directors, and even the property of the company. The territorial revenues being in many instances unavoidably implicated in their commercial concerns, the absolute command of the former, as to their application and expenditure, would necessarily carry with it a control over the latter, and might be used to supersede the efficiency of the directors in the only branch of the company's affairs that was left to their management. The measure itself of sending four regiments to India was not less injurious to the rights and interests of the company, than the unlimited power under

[c] Speech of Mr. Fox on the second reading of the bill.
[d] See parliamentary debates, March, 1788, *passim*.

which

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which it was to be executed. It would have been more œconomical and just, either to have suffered the company to raise four regiments, or to have sent over the 2400 men which were wanting to complete the king's regiments already in India:—more œconomical, because in the one case the company's troops are, and would be maintained at infinitely less expense than the king's; in the other, the company would be free from the additional burthen of all the officers of the four new regiments:—more just, because, in the former case, the company would have enjoyed the patronage of the troops which they were to pay, and might provide for many of their own deserving officers, six hundred of whom, reduced at the late peace, were living in very distressed situations in India. It was farther impolitic, as it would create a jealousy and disgust among the officers in the company's service. The opponents next proceeded to the motives of ministers, which they alleged to be a desire of extending their own influence and patronage, at the expense of the India company. The ministers had formed a regular progressive plan, to grasp all the patronage of India. The direction claimed by the board of control afforded grounds of jealousy in another view; it placed a revenue at the disposal of the king's ministers, for raising and paying an army without consent of parliament, and was therefore inconsistent with the bill of rights, and a dangerous departure from the principles of the British constitution.

Arguments for it.

By the supporters of the declaratory act, it was contended, first, respecting the rule of construction, that the principle could only be admitted, so far as was consistent with the spirit and express objects of the statute itself; it could be no reason for an interpretation of a subsequent law, that it militated against a prior; it would be absurd to put a sense upon an act, that would defeat the main ends for

which

which it was passed; and with regard to the act of 1781, such parts of it as were inconsistent with the provisions of the subsequent arrangement, were virtually, though not expressly, repealed. The object of the plan of 1784 was, to take the entire management of territorial possessions, and the political government of India, out of the hands of the company, leaving them only the direction of their commercial concerns. The board of control was in future to be responsible to the public for the prosperity, defence, and security, of our Indian possessions, and was therefore to be invested with all the authorities necessary for the due discharge of the important trusts. These powers were given in general terms, and the mode of exercising them in particular cases was specified: in some they had a negative upon the orders of the directors; in others, where a difference of opinion arose, the board might enforce the execution of its own orders. The act in general clauses expressed this power which was claimed, and without it would have been totally inadequate to its object. Could it be supposed that parliament intended to leave to the company, who, it might be expected, from the short duration of their charter, would attend chiefly to their own immediate pecuniary interests, the entire disposition of their revenues, without enabling the board of control, who were responsible for the defence and security of the whole, to appropriate such part of them as should be thought necessary for those purposes? The assertion of opposition, that either Mr. Pitt or the board of control had understood the act in the sense imputed, was totally unfounded in truth, and unsupported by any evidence. With regard to the œconomy and policy of the measure, the company's troops might be raised and maintained at a smaller expense; but these were not sufficient for guarding India against dangers by which it was now threatened. As to the additional

patronage

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patronage said to accrue to the crown, it was denied: on the grand question of standing armies, there were inaccuracies in all the existing laws. The bill of rights was not very explicit; it hardly stated the illegality of a standing army within the kingdom, but was silent with respect to military force in our settlements abroad. Mr. Pitt declared, that if any danger was apprehended from the bill before the house, relative either to the augmentation of the army, or the patronage of India in general, he was ready to receive any modifications which might be offered to avert such danger. In the committee he proposed several clauses for so modifying the bill, as to remove the objections respecting patronage. The bill was carried in the house of commons by a majority of fifty-four; and, after experiencing strong opposition in the house of peers, was passed into a law; and thus it was declared that the commissioners, being instituted for the territorial administration of India by the act of 1784, possessed a directorial, as well as controlling power, in whatever was necessary to the effectual execution of the trust reposed in them by the act of 1784.

The bill is passed into a law.

Extension of the mutiny bill.

In the mutiny bill of this session, a clause was proposed for incorporating with the army a new body of military artificers. It was objected to this project, that it was an unnecessary extension of the military law, and consequently inconsistent with the principles of the constitution. These artificers had served the army, hitherto, without diminution of their liberty, and no necessity was shown why their tenure of service should be changed. The great advocate for the clause was the duke of Richmond.[e] Such a corps (he said) was employed in all the armies abroad, and found to be extremely useful: he had proposed such an establishment to

[e] Debates of the Peers, 1788.

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his majesty, who was pleased to signify his approbation of the scheme. The policy of the nation had considered it as right that all soldiers should continue in such a state of subordination; therefore artificers, being enlisted regularly as soldiers, ought undoubtedly to become subject to the same law. Such a change was not to be accounted any hardship; since no species of trial, however popular it might be, was more fair and candid than trials by a court martial. The clause, after a long discussion, was at length carried without a division.

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Bill against the smuggled exportation of wool.

At the instance of the woollen manufacturers, a bill was introduced in the house of commons, for rendering more effectual, laws against the private exportation of wool. The manufacturers asserted, that of long or combing wool, to the amount of 13,000 packs were annually smuggled to France: hence it was inferred; first, that the wool-growers were by this means enabled within the kingdom to keep up the price of their commodity beyond its just standard, to the great detriment of our staple manufacture; secondly, that there ensued a loss to Britain of the surplus value of the manufactured articles over the raw materials, and of the increased population, which the employment of an additional number of manufacturers would produce; and thirdly, that the smuggled wool, being an article necessary to the French manufactures, it enabled them to rival ours. In answer to these arguments, it was contended, chiefly by country gentlemen, that it was an unnecessary and unjust attack upon the landed interest. The quantity alleged to be smuggled bore no proportion to the whole produce of the country, and subtracted only about a fifteenth share, even at the calculation of the proposers; but there was no evidence of the calculation being just. The price of wool was not enhanced beyond its just standard: as a proof that the manufacture was not injured by it, they demonstrated the increase

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crease of the value of woollen goods, exported from the year 1776 to the year 1787, to be in the proportion of nearly one-third. Upon the second inference it was said, that admitting the quantity of wool stated to be smuggled into France, it did not follow that our manufacturers would work up that additional quantity above what they now do, merely by preventing its making its way thither; on the contrary, unless it were first proved, which had never been asserted, that, in consequence of the exportation, the manufacturers are in want of materials to work upon, it was fair to conclude, that the quantity exported was a mere surplus, and that the British manufacturers would not work a single pound more, though the whole should be kept at home: a view of the very flourishing state of our manufactures was sufficient to convince us that there was no ground of apprehension from the rivalship of France. It was replied, that the restraints proposed to be laid upon the wool-growers would not materially affect their interests. The present bill was consonant to the existing laws, and was only designed to carry into more effectual execution those principles of policy, respecting the exportation of wool, by which this country for so many years had been governed, and under which both our manufacturers and our wool-growers had flourished and grown rich together. The bill underwent a very minute discussion, in which party politics appeared to occupy no share; and at length was carried by a large majority.

Commencement of an inquiry concerning negro slavery.

A SUBJECT of very considerable importance, and which long occupied the attention both of parliament and the nation, was this year for the first time brought before the house of commons: this was the celebrated question concerning the trade carried on for purchasing negro slaves to cultivate our possessions in the western world.

State of facts.

SLAVERY is so evidently repugnant to the feelings of

of a Briton, that it may at first sight appear astonishing no means had been devised to prevent the existence of such a state in the British dominions. The mercantile character of this country predominated over the political, when, for the acquisition of wealth, she admitted the destruction of freedom; and the guardians of European liberty became the most active instruments of African slavery. This inconsistency did not appear to have impressed any of the most zealous and powerful champions of constitutional freedom, during the greater part of the eighteenth century. Planters and traders, who are the most frequent and constant observers of this state, were not likely to testify an abhorrence of a system, by which they were so considerable gainers, or even perhaps to feel the adequate detestation for oppressions, with which they were so familiar. Statesmen might overlook some rigours, through which they conceived the nation derived private and public wealth; and the people in general were too distant to consider the condition of the negroes. Nevertheless, the mild and liberal principles of British policy seemed extremely inimical to human thraldom; and the doctrines of benevolent philosophers were totally hostile to such a practice; but neither enlightened policy, nor ingenious theory, were the causes which at this period produced a prevalent enmity to slavery: a more rapidly operative principle exerted itself in favour of negro freedom: religious zeal was infused into the subject, and, engaging the passions of many individuals, stimulated them much more powerfully than the deductions of moral science, or the dictates of political wisdom. An opinion was eagerly disseminated, that the state of slavery was incompatible with christianity. This notion seems to have been drawn from the consideration of detached passages, rather than from the general spirit of that admirable system. The religion of Jesus,

General and special objections to slavery.

It is impugned as inimical to christianity, as well as justice and humanity.

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seeking the happiness of mankind, finds its sources in the disposition and character of the individual; and comprehending the vast variety of situation and sentiment, delivers general rules, enforced by cogent motives, for performing the various duties of social and civil life; political establishments and gradations it leaves to be formed according to the circumstances of the case, and character of the people. Philanthropy, which mingled with a piety sincere, though somewhat eccentric, distinguished many of the earliest votaries of negro freedom; and in the ardour of benignant project, overlooked difficulties of execution; indeed, perhaps, rather indulged itself in fancying advantage from the change, than accurately ascertained the probability of benefit, even should their wish be accomplished. In the southern provinces of America, soon after the establishment of their independence, the quakers presented a strong and pathetic address to the several legislative assemblies; in which they exhorted these bodies to abolish slavery; and in many instances emancipated the negroes in their own possession. In Britain the same sect first followed the example of their American brethren, and presented a similar petition in 1787 to parliament. The cause, embraced by the enthusiasm of religion and benevolence, procured a great number of votaries. From sympathy and imitation, it became extremely popular; literary ingenuity was not wanting, and no works were read with such avidity, as compositions which decried negro slavery. As usual in controversy, one side of the question only was considered by its supporters, and the statement of propositions was such, as to render conclusions obvious. A topic repeatedly employed was, DIFFERENCE OF COLOUR IS NO REASON FOR FORFEITURE OF LIBERTY. On so trivial a truism very popular pamphlets were founded; eminent divines embraced the cause; recommended it from the pulpit, and in printed discourses.

Pious and benevolent enthusiasm in favour of the negroes.

courses. Churchmen and dissenters concurred in eagerly inculcating the abolition of slavery; many were so far transported by philanthropic feelings, as to declare their readiness to forego all the advantages and habitual gratifications which arose from our West India Islands, rather than enjoy them through the compulsory labour of their fellow-creatures. With this enthusiastic zeal, hypocrisy, as usual, occasionally mingled; and there were demagogues who, without possessing much tenderness of disposition themselves, courted popularity by coinciding with the humane sentiments, which were so generally diffused. For a considerable time a stranger might have supposed, if he judged from prevalent discourse and writing, that the African negroes monopolized misery, and therefore, that the highest duty of christian benevolence was to afford them relief. While this fervour predominated, a society was formed to collect information on which to ground a petition to parliament; and a very considerable sum of money was subscribed in order to defray the expence.

Mr. Wilberforce; talents, character, and laudable zeal of.

Among those who took the most active share in endeavouring to relieve the negroes, was Mr. Wilberforce, member of parliament for the county of York. Of good talents, active and indefatigable industry, and extensive knowledge, this gentleman held a high place in the public estimation; and possessed considerable fortune and influence: these advantages he uniformly directed to such pursuits as he thought conducive to virtue, religion, and the happiness of his fellow-creatures. Conceiving the cause of the negroes to be that of piety and humanity, he had employed persevering labour, in order to learn the particulars of their treatment; and viewing the subject as a British senator, he attempted to reconcile political expediency with what he deemed a discharge of christian and moral duty. From these motives he was believed to have

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entered much more minutely into the detail of the slave-trade, than any other member of the legislature.

Opposite arguments.

WHILE one party exerted itself so strenuously to render the abolition generally popular, and thereby prepared to facilitate its passage through parliament, another, with less animation and impressiveness of eloquence, but with a considerable share of sound reasoning, laboured to prove, that the advantages alleged to be consequent upon abolition were ideal, and founded upon abstract theories of philanthropy, without a knowledge of the existing case. The evil of slavery (it was said) depends on opinion: that state is universally prevalent in Africa; and the minds of the negroes are habituated to its contemplation, as one of the most common conditions of life. Having the principles of dissension and hostility in common with other men, the African tribes are often engaged in war: one consequence of war is captivity; the usual treatment of captives is either massacre or sale. The market for slaves, independent of European purchasers, is comparatively inconsiderable in Nigritia. The chance of the individual of escaping butchery, in a great measure depends on the demand from European traders. Carried to the West Indies, the negroes are on the whole well treated: by some individual masters they may have been hardly used; but in general, as can be proved from persons most conversant with these countries, they are contented and happy. Severity is not the interest of planters; and if even malignant passions transport masters or their delegates to unwise cruelty, the recurrence of such acts may be prevented by judicious regulations. Narrow in their views, the negroes like other savages repose their chief happiness in the supply of animal wants: indolent and improvident, they are often deficient in the exertions requisite for their maintenance. Nothing is more

Slavery an evil great or small, according to the circumstances and sentiments of the sufferers.

The condition of African negroes is meliorated by becoming slaves to British masters.

Slaves in our plantations generally happy.

more frequent in Africa than famine, which destroys great numbers of the inhabitants: whereas in the West Indies they have abundance of provisions. To a Briton, death, either by sword or famine, may be preferable to life and slavery; but to a Nigritian the case is far different: by transporting him to a situation, in which his animal wants are fully supplied, where by personal exertions he can modify slavery, and has nothing to fear from either famine or a victorious enemy, you place him in a higher state, according to his estimate of good, than if you had suffered him to remain in Africa. The slave-trade does not on the whole violate humanity, because it does not on the whole diminish that happiness which humanity seeks to promote. The culture of the West India islands, so productive a source of private opulence and public revenue, depends upon labourers inured to such a climate. Were we to forego the advantage of such possessions, what would be the consequence? the other European states would take up the benefits which we abandoned: the slave-trade would be still carried on, though Britain did not participate. It would not be real generosity, but romantic extravagance, to abstain from so advantageous a commerce, when we ourselves should lose, and our rivals only should gain by its discontinuance. Very great capitals have been embarked, both in the West India islands and African slave-trade, under the sanction of public faith, which guaranteed the commerce by many internal regulations and foreign treaties for rendering it productive. Are we to sacrifice a great and valuable property to philanthropic chimeras, totally unfounded in fact and experience?

If Britain abolish slavery other European states will reap the benefit.

Great capitals embarked in this trade, which is a large source of riches and revenue.

Petitions for and against the slave trade.

Petitions and remonstrances containing such topics, for and against the abolition, were presented to the house of commons and privy council. A committee of the latter was appointed for investi-

The coun-

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1788. cil institutes an inquiry into the details and alleged cruelties.

gating facts. Mr. Pitt finding that the information hitherto collected was not sufficient to authorise parliamentary discussion, on the ninth of May proposed, that the consideration of the slave-trade should be deferred till the commencement of the next session; meanwhile, the inquiry which was instituted before the privy-council would be brought to such a state of maturity, as to make it fit that the result should be laid before the house, that it might facilitate their investigation, and enable them to proceed to a decision, founded equally upon principles of humanity, justice, and sound policy.

Sir William Dolben's motion for regulating the transportation of negroes.

SIR WILLIAM DOLBEN introduced a measure of intermediate relief, in a bill for regulating the transportation of African natives to the British West Indies: the object of this proposition was to accommodate the slaves, during their passage, better than had been hitherto done. It was intended to limit the number who should be conveyed, in proportion to the tonnage of the vessel; to secure to them good and sufficient provisions, and other matters equally conducive to their health, and their accommodation. While the bill was pending, a petition was presented from the merchants and other inhabitants of Liverpool, praying to be heard by their counsel against this regulating bill: this request being granted, it was contended at the bar of the house, that the proposed reduction of number would essentially injure the trade, and that it was founded on an assertion of hardships which did not exist. The plea of the merchants was not made out to the satisfaction of the house; and the bill, though in a small degree modified, passed unanimously, without any material alteration. In the house of lords it underwent such changes, that the commons considered its original object as not attained: a new bill was accordingly

is passed into a law.

cordingly introduced, which passed both houses, and received the royal assent.

1788. Mr. Pitt's bill for the relief and recompence of the American loyalists.

ABOUT the same time, Mr. Pitt called the attention of the house to a different class of sufferers, the American loyalists, and the losses sustained by them through their adherence to the parent country during the late war. Commissioners had been appointed to enquire into the claims; and in consequence of their report, the minister divided the claimants into four classes. In the first class he ranked those who had resided in America at the commencement of the war, and who, in pursuance of their principles of loyalty and adherence to Britain, were obliged to abandon their estates and property in the colonies; which were in consequence seized and confiscated by the revolters. The mode he meant to adopt[f], with respect to this class of loyalists, whom he considered as having the strongest claims of any, would be to allow the full amount[g] to those whose demands were so small, that any deduction from them would materially affect their means of comfortable existence. The second class of claimants were persons who, having resided in England during the war, made claims upon alleged loss of property in America: these were not sufferers in the same degree as the first class, because they had not been driven out of America, but had made their choice: though, however, their option was to remain in England, still they were entitled to expect compensation for the loss of property in America, which they had

[f] See Annual Register 1788, p. 13.

[g] His proposition was, "that all such loyalists shall receive the full amount of their losses, as far as the same do not exceed the sum of ten thousand pounds; and shall also receive, where the amount of such losses shall be above ten thousand pounds in the whole, and not above thirty-five thousand pounds in the whole, ninety pounds per cent. of such part of the said losses as shall exceed ten thousand pounds; and where such losses shall be above thirty-five thousand pounds, eighty-five pounds per cent. of such of the said losses as shall exceed ten thousand pounds; and where the same shall be above fifty thousand pounds, eighty pounds per cent. of such part of the said losses as shall be above ten thousand pounds."

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incurred through a preference of this country: he proposed respecting this as the former class, that property affording only the means of comfortable subsistence should be paid in full of the established claims; but that beyond the sum deemed requisite, the deduction should be considerably greater.[n] The third class consisted of loyalists who had either enjoyed places or exercised professions in America, but were driven away in consequence of their loyalty to this country, and lost their income. With regard to these it was to be considered, that though they had been expelled from America, they were able to obtain fresh incomes in this country, by exercising their talents and their industry: he therefore proposed, that all whose incomes did not exceed four hundred pounds a-year, should receive half-pay; persons whose incomes were higher, should receive forty pounds for every hundred above four hundred, and under fifteen hundred; and beyond that sum, at the rate of thirty per cent. The fourth class of claimants consisted of those who had been obliged to leave their habitations and property in consequence of the cession of that country at the late peace: as their loss had been incurred by a national act, without any alternative of their own, he proposed that they should be completely re-imbursed by the public. He then stated the sum to which the established claims amounted. The propositions which he founded on this account were received with great approbation, and a resolution for the payment of the same, after some modification, was unanimously adopted. Thus, sufferers through loyalty and patriotism to our sovereign and country, received from the national munificence a liberal compensation for the damages which they had sustained.

[n] That from all those claims, amounting from ten thousand pounds to thirty thousand, a deduction should be made of twenty per cent.; and a farther additional deduction of twenty per cent., in progression, upon every additional fifty thousand claimed.

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1788. Commencement of the trial of Mr. Hastings.

A CONSIDERABLE portion of parliamentary attention was directed to the prosecution and trial of Mr. Hastings. In consequence of the order of the house of lords, near the close of the last session, to the defendant to deliver answers to the charges alleged against him by the house of commons, on the prescribed day he appeared at the bar, and presented answers. Of these the lords sent a copy to the house of commons; the answers being read, Mr. Burke moved, that they should be referred to a committee which should have the conduct of the prosecution. This measure being embraced, Mr. Pitt proposed Mr. Burke as the first member; the house unanimously concurring, Mr. Burke named Mr. Francis, and to support his nomination, stated the immense advantages which would accrue to the committee from the very extensive knowledge of that gentleman. The abilities and information of Mr. Francis were universally allowed; but great political differences had subsisted between him and the accused, in India, and some personal animosity was conceived to remain; on these grounds a great majority of the house voted against the motion. The rest of the committee consisted of the same gentlemen who had been delegated to present the charges to the lords; and in addition to them, Mr. Wilbraham, Mr. Fitzpatrick, and Mr. Courtney. To the answer of Mr. Hastings, two days after, Mr. Burke brought from the committee a replication, averring the charges to be true, and that they would be ready to prove the same against him before the lords, at such convenient time and place as should be appointed. The reply being carried by Mr. Burke to the peers, Wednesday the thirteenth of February was fixed for proceeding upon the trial in Westminster-hall; and the members of the recently appointed committee were nominated managers for conducting the trial. Mr. Fox proposed that Mr. Francis should be added to the committee;

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mittee; but the majority of the house continued to oppose the insertion of his name.[i] The committees were appointed by both houses to search the records of parliament, for precedents relative to the mode of proceeding in trials by impeachment; and the necessary orders were made for their accommodation in Westminster-hall, for the admission of spectators, the attendance of witnesses, and other matters respecting the regularity of their proceeding. On the thirteenth of February the trial commenced with the usual formalities.[k] Mr. Hastings being called into court, the lord chancellor addressed him in the following terms:

"Warren Hastings,

"You stand at the bar of this court, charged with high crimes and misdemeanors; a copy of which has been delivered to you: you have been allowed counsel, and a long time has been given you for your defence; but this is not to be con-

[i] Mr. Francis at this time, in a very able speech, entered into an account of his conduct respecting Mr. Hastings, for the last thirteen years, both in India and in England; which, though in some degree individual justification, contains much important statement and remark on the general subject concerning which the differences existed. Mr. Francis and Mr. Hastings having fought a duel, and the former gentleman having been dangerously wounded, they had exchanged forgiveness; in what sense that forgiveness was to be interpreted, Mr. Francis explained in the following passage;—"It was my lot to be dangerously wounded: as I conceived immediate death inevitable, I thought of nothing but to die in peace with all men, particularly Mr. Hastings. I called him to me, gave him my hand, and desired him to consider in what situation my death would leave him. By that action, and by those words, undoubtedly I meant to declare, that I freely forgave him the insult he had offered me, and the fatal consequence which had attended it. I meant that we should stand in the same relation to each other, as if the duel and the cause of it had never happened. But did I tell him that, if I survived, I would renounce the whole plan and principle of my public life? that I would cease to oppose his measures? On my return to England, I found that a parliamentary inquiry into the late transactions in India was already begun, and I was almost immediately ordered to attend one of the committees employed upon that inquiry. Could I, without treachery to the public, refuse to give evidence or information necessary for the public service, when it was demanded of me by the authority of the house of commons?" See Parliamentary Debates.

[k] The house of commons, about eleven o'clock, preceded by the managers of the impeachment, who were led by Mr. Burke, came from their own house into the hall. The lords, half an hour after, entered from the house of peers: first, official attendants on the house in a rising series, commencing with the clerks, and terminating with the judges; afterwards the peers, beginning with the junior barons, and ending with the prince of Wales.

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sidered as a particular indulgence to you, as it arises from the necessity of the case; the crimes with which you are charged, being stated to have been committed in a distant place. These charges contain the most weighty allegations, and they come from the highest authority: this circumstance, however, though it carries with it the most serious importance, is not to prevent you from making your defence in a firm and collected manner; in the confidence that, as a British subject, you are entitled to, and will receive, full justice from a British court." Mr. Hastings answered:

"My lords,

"I AM come to this high tribunal, equally impressed with a confidence in my own intregrity, and in the justice of the court before which I stand."

THE two first days being employed in reading the charges, the third was appointed for opening the same, stating the nature and quality of the imputations, the evidence by which they were to be supported, and the guilt which, to the defendant, if they were proved, would attach. Never had an inquiry of more magnitude been instituted before a judicial assembly. The question was, whether a man to whom a trust affecting the happiness or misery of millions had been delegated, in the discharge of his office, had been a faithful or unfaithful trustee to his employers, the protector or the scourge of the immense and populous regions committed to his care? The question derived a very high additional importance from the character of the accused, whom friends, enemies, and impartial men, concurred in deeming a person of the most powerful and comprehensive talents; from the character of the accuser, whom friends, enemies, and impartial men, concurred in esteeming a person of the most extraordinary genius, multifarious knowledge, and splendid eloquence, that had ever graced a British senate. The anxiety of the public to

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hear Mr. Burke speak upon so vast a subject, against Mr. Hastings, brought an immense concourse of hearers to the hall.

Speech of Mr. Burke.

THE court was assembled to the number of one hundred and sixty-four peers, and the chancellor having called the managers to proceed, Mr. Burke rose and said, that he stood forth by order of the commons of Great Britain, to support the charge of high crimes and misdemeanors which they had exhibited against Warren Hastings, Esq.; and that he had a body of evidence to produce to substantiate the whole and every part of those charges. The gentlemen who were joined with him in supporting the impeachment, had instructed him to open the cause with an account of the grounds on which the commons had proceeded; a general view of the nature of the crimes alleged; and with an explanation of concomitant circumstances that were necessary to elucidate the accusation. The dreadful disorders of our Indian government were acknowledged; it was not till after every mode of legislative prevention had been tried without effect, till they found, during a course of fourteen years, that inquiries and resolutions and laws were equally disregarded, that they had recourse to a penal prosecution. The crimes imputed were not errors of human frailty, nor the effects of imperious necessity; they originated in the worst passions, and evinced a total extinction of moral principle: they were committed against advice, supplication, and remonstrance, and in defiance of the direct commands of lawful authority. The accused was the first in rank, station, and power, under whom as the head all the peculation and tyranny of India was embodied, disciplined, and paid; and in striking at whom, therefore, they would strike at the whole corps of delinquents. The evidence which supported the charges, in many instances amounted to the clearness and precision required by the English

English law; but a considerable part did not reach municipal accuracy. The prosecutor contended, that it was a right of the house of commons, in an impeachment, not to be bound by the confined rules and maxims of evidence prevalent in the lower courts; nor by any other than those of natural, immutable and substantial justice.[l] This mode of interpretation was due to suffering nations, who were unconcerned in our technical distinctions, but on the great principle of morality wished punishment to follow guilt. It was highly necessary to prevent the disgraceful imputation [m] which might fall either upon that high court, as if it were corrupted by the wealth of India, or upon the laws of England, as impotent in the means of punishing successful fraud and oppression. Descending from preliminary observations to the actual subject of the charge, he stated the relations in which Mr. Hastings stood, and the duties which from these he had incurred; in order to prove his transgressions. The powers delegated to Mr. Hastings by the India company, and which he was charged with having abused, were derived from two sources; the charter bestowed by the crown, under the authority of parliament, and the grant from the mogul emperor of the Dewannee, or high stewardship of Bengal, in the year 1766. He exhibited an historical account of the company from its first establishment, the powers which it had delegated to Mr. Hastings, and which Mr. Burke charged him with having abused. He next proceeded to the rights with which the company

[l] This doctrine, that the rank and dignity of the assertor constituted a just ground of difference in the criterion of *proof*, is certainly not logically accurate; neither would it be politically wise, that the quality of the accuser should affect the requisite testimony, as in a criminal case there would be a substitution of authority for proof, which might subject liberty, property, and life, to arbitrary caprice.

[m] This argument proceeded on a supposition, that the *high* court was to be influenced by the fear of censure from misapprehension, instead of giving judgment according to the merits of the case.

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were invested by the mogul emperor, to the collection of the revenue delegated by the company to Mr. Hastings, and which he also charged him with having grossly violated. The alleged violation of duties so originating, and abuses of powers delegated for such general and specified purposes, Mr. Burke represented with an eloquence which so astonished and agitated every hearer of fancy or sensibility, as for a considerable time to preclude the exertion of that judgment that could distinguish pictures from realities. Having exhibited Mr. Hastings as a monster of flagitiousness and crimes, he concluded with a peroration which described the nature of the cause, accusation, accused, accuser and tribunal, in all their constituent parts, and closed with the following words: "Therefore it was with confidence ordered by the commons, that I impeach Warren Hastings, Esq. of high crimes and misdemeanors: I impeach him in the name of the commons of Great Britain in parliament assembled, whose parliamentary trust he has betrayed:

"I IMPEACH him in the name of all the commons of Great Britain, whose national character he has dishonoured:

"I IMPEACH him in the name of the people of India, whose laws, rights, and liberties, he has subverted, whose properties he has destroyed, whose countries he has laid waste and desolate."

SUCH were the grounds adduced by the orator in a speech which occupied three hours for four days successively. Mr. Burke having concluded his account of the substance, Mr. Fox addressed the court on the mode of the charges: he stated, that the committee proposed to open and adduce evidence which should substantiate one charge at a time; to hear the prisoner's defence and evidence upon that charge, and afterwards to reply; and to proceed in the same maner in all the other articles.

Mr. Hastings's

Mr. Hastings's counsel being asked if they consented to this mode? replied in the negative. The manner proposed was, they said, contrary to the practice of all courts of justice, and was inconsistent with all principles of equity. After some debate it was resolved, that, according to the usual practice on trials, the prosecutor should complete his case before the accused commenced his defence. Mr. Fox opened the Benares charge, which he brought down to the expulsion of Cheyt Sing; the following part was finished by Mr. Grey: Mr. Anstruther conducted the examination of evidence, and summed up the whole of that article. Mr. Adam, on the fifteenth of April, opened the second accusation respecting the Begums: Mr. Sheridan examined the witnesses, and summed up the charge; the last that came before the court, during that session of parliament.

Motion for the impeachment of Sir Elijah Impey.

ANOTHER accusation of Indian delinquency was brought before the commons in the conduct of sir Elijah Impey. This task was undertaken by sir Gilbert Elliot, who, in a very able and eloquent speech, maintained two general principles; that India must be redressed or lost, and that the only means left of reforming Indian abuse, was the punishment, in some great and signal instances, of Indian delinquency: he stated the nature, the occasion, and the purposes of the commission with which sir Elijah Impey was sent out to India, as involving circumstances which were strong aggravations of his guilt, and increased the necessity of its punishment; that in the two grand objects which were committed to his charge, the protection of the company from the frauds of its servants, and of the natives from the oppression of Europeans, he had, by corruptly changing sides, added his new powers to the very force they were intended to control, and taken an active part in the oppressions which it was his duty to have avenged. Sir

Gilbert

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Gilbert Elliot presented to the house six distinct articles of accusation.

The subject of the first was the trial and execution of Nundcomar; the second, the defendant's conduct in a certain Patna cause; the third, entitled *extension of jurisdiction*, comprehended various instances, in which the jurisdiction of the court was alleged to have been exercised illegally and oppressively, beyond the intention of the act and charter; the fourth charge, entitled the Cossijurah cause, though also an allegation of illegal assumption, was distinguished (according to the statement of the accuser) by circumstances so important, as to become properly the subject of a separate article; the fifth charge was for his acceptance of the office of judge of the Sudder Dewannee Adaulut, which was contrary to law, and not only repugnant to the spirit of the act and charter, but fundamentally subversive of all its material purposes; the sixth and last charge related to his conduct in the provinces of Oude and Benares, where the chief justice was said to have become the agent and tool of Mr. Hastings in the alleged oppression and plunder of the Begums.

Sir Elijah Impey on his defence contended, that in the acts which were charged he had not exceeded the powers entrusted to him as supreme judge. Respecting the first and most important article, the trial and execution of Nundcomar for forgery, he had been accused of extra-judicial interference. Neither Nundcomar (it was contended by sir Gilbert Elliot) nor the person whose name was forged, were subject to the jurisdiction of the English court. By the laws of India, forgery is not punishable capitally; and thus a man was put to death by a court to which he was not amenable, for a crime not capital by the laws to which he was amenable. Sir Elijah Impey argued, that though

though the authority of the supreme court did not extend over all the inhabitants of the English provinces in India, it included the inhabitants of Calcutta. Nundcomar had not been tried as a native of Bengal, but as an inhabitant of Calcutta, where he resided, and where of course he was amenable to the laws of the place. A motion being made in the house, resolved into a committee, that the first charge exhibited against Sir Elijah Impey contained matter of impeachment, it was negatived by a majority of seventy-three to fifty-five; and it was afterwards voted, that the other charges should not be taken into consideration.

Mr. Grenville's bill for improving his father's law respecting contested elections.

THIS year Mr. Grenville proposed certain amendments and additions to the bill brought into parliament by his father, for the better regulation of the trials of controverted elections. When the existing act had been proposed, Mr. Grenville said its principal aim was to take the trial of petitions on controverted elections out of their hands, and to place them in a committee so constituted, likely to do strict justice to the parties. That object, it was universally allowed, had been fully answered; but collateral inconveniences had been incurred, which, intent on the main end, the author had overlooked. Ever since the bill had passed into a law, an infinite number of petitions, complaining of undue elections, had been presented in the first session of every parliament; and many of them, after having taken up much of the time of the house, had proved frivolous. To prevent the interruption of public business, he proposed that the committee empowered to determine whether the election petition presented, or the defence offered in answer to it, was frivolous, should adjudge the payment of costs against the party to blame. This was merely an act of justice; yet such a regulation would save much expence to individuals, and much time and

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trouble to the house. The present was the most proper season for considering and determining such a subject, as there was actually no petition concerning elections before the house, and the minds of members were therefore perfectly cool and open to impartial deliberation. The bill was introduced, passed both houses without opposition, and received the royal assent.

Supplies.

On the sixth of May, the financial plan for the year was proposed by Mr. Pitt. The minister observed, that several extraordinary expences had been necessarily incurred; in the navy there was an increase beyond the peace establishment of 446,000*l.*; in the army of 233,000*l.*; and in the ordnance of 61,000*l.* These augmented demands were occasioned by the circumstances of our putting the distant possessions of the country into a state of more complete defence, and were not to be considered as the permanent necessary expences of the nation; and to these there were several sums to be added, which could not occur again, or at least could not make a part of our settled yearly expence: such was the sum for the relief of the loyalists, the expence of the late armament, and the vote for the payment of the debts of his royal highness the prince of Wales; these demands added together amounted to 1,282,000*l.* which was to be considered as extraordinary, and consequently to be deducted from the settled regular establishment of the country. It had been deemed wise to put every part of the British dominions into such a posture of defence as to secure the blessings of peace. Notwithstanding the extraordinary expences incurred, the receipts of the country had fully answered even unforeseen demands, without deviating from the plan which the legislature had adopted for diminishing the national debt. When such were the savings in a year of unusual expence,

expence, as our resources were fast increasing in the extension of commerce, and the improvement of revenue, we might most fairly infer that our financial concerns were in a state of progressive melioration: it might be well argued from probable causes, that such a country as England, blessed with peace, must rapidly increase in the various constituents of prosperity; that she did so, was ascertained from fact and experience: he had formed an estimate from an average of four years: the revenue of 1783 amounted to ten millions, besides the land and malt tax: the revenue of 1787, with the same exclusion, amounted to thirteen millions; the additional imposts had not exceeded a million and a half; hence the other million and a half must have arisen from the suppression of smuggling, and extension of trade: he was about soon to adopt farther regulations for the restrictions of fraud, and commerce was very fast rising, so that he augured a much greater excess of receipt beyond expenditure. Mr. Sheridan, with an ingenuity that evidently surpassed his investigation of financial details, endeavoured to controvert the ministerial statements, but did not succeed. The supplies granted this year were eighteen thousand seamen, and about twenty thousand landmen, besides those who were on foreign service; no new taxes were imposed, but a lottery was appointed. The various departments of duty occupied parliament until the eleventh of July, when the houses were prorogued by a speech from the throne. His majesty thanked the legislature for their uniform and diligent attention to the laborious services of the present year. To the house of commons he expressed peculiar gratitude for the readiness and liberality with which they had granted the requisite supplies. Hostilities had commenced between the imperial sovereigns and Turkey, but he received

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ceived the strongest assurances from the respective powers of their amicable dispositions to this country. The security and welfare of his own dominions, and the preservation of the general tranquillity of Europe, were the objects of engagements which he had recently formed with the king of Prussia and the States-general.

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Affairs of the continent.

Objects of the imperial combination.

THE attention of Europe was at this time principally occupied by the conduct and operations of its eastern powers. The confederacy between Austria and Russia, originating in the causes and directed to the objects which have been already commemorated, had been long engaged in maturing its plans. Ever since the conquest of the Crimea, Catharine was occupied in desultory war with the Tartar tribes adjoining her frontiers. Immensely superior as the Russians were in force and discipline to these hordes, yet rapid irruptions annoyed those who could have easily repelled regular warfare. Catharine proposed either to conciliate the hostile Tartars by proffered kindness, to dazzle them by displayed magnificence, or to intimidate them by manifested power.[a] The reduction, however, or pacification of these hordes was but a small part of the mighty designs, to promote which she deemed it expedient to visit her late acquisition the Cherson. This journey, planned in 1786, was executed in 1787, but before that time the Tartars produced a change in her original intention. As soon as the intended progress was known, and its believed object was reported, instead of either dazzling or terrifying the Tartars, it became a signal of general and immediate danger, to cement their union in the strongest manner, and urge them to the greatest possible exertion, and determined resistance. Catharine diminished a considerable part of her destined splendor, when not likely to answer her purpose, and a great portion of her military force, which, in the war with the Tartars, could be so much more usefully em-

[a] History of the Reign of Catharine, vol. ii. book x.

ployed

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ployed elsewhere; she still had various purposes to accomplish, by visiting the confines of her own and the Turkish empire. She had employed by her agents very skilful, incessant, and extensive efforts, to seduce the Christian subjects of the Ottoman Porte. Mistress of the principal country in which the Grecian faith prevails, she had declared herself the friend and protectress of the Greek church in all parts of the world; her partizans were very numerous in the heart of the Turkish empire, and she did not doubt, by a near approach, to stimulate their zeal, and rouse them to schemes of ready co-operation.[b] Aware of the imbecility of her son and heir, she had rested the hopes of talents, similar to her own, on the puerile promise of her two grandsons. The second of these princes received the name of Constantine, was dressed and educated from his childhood according to the manner of the Greeks, and always attended by a guard of Grecian youth, who were formed into a corps for that purpose: in short, she endeavoured to excite the wishes and hopes of the Greek Christians, that the empire of the east should be restored under a prince who bore the name of its founder. This youth she proposed to carry with her to the frontiers of Turkey, but indisposition prevented his attendance: she farther designed to inspect her new dominions, to estimate their value, both as actual possessions, and the means of farther acquisition. While the empress thus pursued her grand project, she was anxious to concert measures with Joseph, at once her confederate and tool; and for that purpose invited him to meet her at Cherson: the king of Poland too was present at this congress. Though Stanislaus was far from being able to yield active assistance to the confederates, yet, by the position of his kingdom,

Catharine prepares to visit the Crimea.

She attempts to seduce the Christian subjects of Turkey.

At Cherson she meets her confederate Joseph.

[b] See Annual Register, 1787.

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he could afford the two empires important aid against the Ottomans, by enabling them to unite their force, and act in perfect concert along the whole line of frontier belonging to European Turkey. At this congress the system of aggression appears to have been completely adjusted, although farther preparations were resolved before it should actually commence.

MEANWHILE, report had carried to Constantinople the intended progress to the Cherson, and had represented with her usual exaggeration the superb splendor which was originally designed. Catharine, it was said, was about to be crowned empress of Taurida, and to be declared protectress or autocratrix of the nations of Tartars.[c] A christian was; by ostentatious triumph, to insult mussulmen, whom she had outraged by usurpation. Were Turks so degenerate from their ancestors, as to suffer such insolence and spoliations with impunity? Were those Ottomans who had kept the whole christian world in awe, now to be trampled by a power, till within this century scarcely known in Europe? These considerations influenced the Turks to hostilities, in which they might have appeared precipitate, if it had not been evident that they speedily either must attack or be attacked themselves. War was now, undoubtedly, the purpose of Catharine and Joseph: the question, therefore, with the Turks was, which was the wisest time for commencement?

State of the Turkish empire.

Various circumstances in the situation of the Turkish empire were unfavourable to war: in the northern part of the grand seignior's territories the influence of the Russians was not only generally great, but conspiracies were with strong reason suspected to have been formed by the governors of the two principal provinces, Moldavia and Wallachia, to join the combined empires. In the east

[c] Annual Register, 1786.

the

the prince of Georgia had renounced his allegiance, and even made successful inroads into Asia Minor. The Persians attempted hostilities on the side of Bassora. In the south, the turbulent beys involved Egypt in civil commotions.[d] These insurrections were believed to have been fomented by the Russian consul at Alexandria, and were headed by Murat Bey, a Mameluke chieftain. The dreadful contests almost desolated that fertile country before any assistance could arrive from Constantinople. Hassan Bey, the grand admiral of the Turkish empire, being consulted, formed a project for not only crushing the present insurrection, but annihilating as a separate class the Mamelukes, whose ferocity and rapacity had so long oppressed and plundered Egypt; and for this purpose to extinguish the order of the beys which had headed and directed these outrages. When this essential resolution should be effected, he intended to divide the country into five distinct governments, under the immediate authority of the Porte, and all the officers of its new appointment. An armament, comprehending two strong fleets, twenty thousand land forces, with a train of artillery, plentifully supplied with stores and provisions, and equipt with equal secrecy and dispatch, arrived at Rosetta before the rebellious beys had entertained the smallest conception of such a design. The pacha immediately marched against the Mamelukes, waiting to receive him with a more numerous army. After being repeatedly superior, he gained one decisive victory at Grand Cairo, made himself master of all Lower Egypt, compelled the rebel chieftains to fly into Upper, and was preparing to pursue them into those regions, with the confident expectation of completely accomplishing his design. The situation of the beys now appeared desperate, and another year probably would have enabled the pacha to overthrow the

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Commotions in Egypt.

[d] See Annual Register, 1786, chap. viii.

Mameluke

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Mameluke power. Should hostilities commence with Russia and Germany, the whole force of Turkey must be exerted against these formidable enemies; the pacha and his army must be immediately recalled: a declaration of war, therefore, was a necessary derelietion of the pacha's project, when it was about to be crowned with complete success. On this view, policy appeared to dictate that war should, if possible, be deferred; on the other hand, besides the general advantage from striking the first blow, there were special reasons of considerable weight for anticipating the certain intentions of the christian empires. Catharine, conceiving the time of beginning the war to depend upon herself and her ally, had not been hasty in preparation, and was at present chiefly occupied in providing for her own security in the north and west, before she, with her confederate, proceeded to invade the security of her neighbour in the south and east. Engaged in negociation with the powers in the western vicinity of her capital, and not intending to go to war during that campaign, she had suffered her military equipments to proceed slowly. Her finances were by no means in a condition favourable to the increased demands of hostilities; she had been greatly exhausted by the former war: and though her projects and improvements might ultimately tend to enrich her country, yet her establishments, both for splendour and for force, together with her profuse largesses to her favourites[e], or at their instance, were extremely expensive; and her present expenditure actually exceeded her present income.

Reasons which disposed Turkey to strike the first blow.

THE sultan had beheld with most indignant resentment the ambitious usurpation of Russia; from her invasion of the Crimea, he appealed with success to his subjects, both as Turks and mussulmen, on the treatment which he had received; he aroused

[e] Memoirs of Catharine, *passim*.

their patriotism, and their religious enthusiasm; animated by such incentives, he trusted that their native courage would operate, and that the ability of the pacha, aided and supported by other officers, would give it discipline and direction: great western powers, he not only inferred from their policy, but knew from their assurances, would interest themselves in a contest so materially affecting the balance of Europe, which they had ever been so anxious to preserve. The vast accession of treasure from the capture of Cairo, the depository of Mameluke riches in addition to their usual revenue, placed the Turkish finances in a flourishing state.[f] From the situation of his enemy, the state of his own resources, and, beyond all, the spirit which diffused itself through his people, notwithstanding the successes of his armies in Egypt, he resolved immediately to withdraw them from the south, and employ them in striking the first blow against the autocratrix of the north. The grand pacha, hearing from Constantinople that his talents and military force might be required elsewhere, lamented the cause, but did not repine at the order; and since he could no longer hope to subvert the Mamelukes, endeavoured to avail himself, as much as possible, of the advantages which they must still retain. In these circumstances he discovered political ability not inferior to his military; he cautiously concealed both his intention of leaving Egypt and its cause, and intimated to the beys, that though, as they themselves must be sensible, his power was able to effect their speedy destruction, yet his master and he would more willingly dispense pardon than punishment. The Mamelukes gladly listened to these overtures, and entered into a negociation, in which the pacha so completely wrought upon their fears, that he compelled them to purchase, with their still remaining

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Treaty of the pacha with the Mamelukes.

[f] Annual Register, 1788, chap. i.

treasures,

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treasures, the forbearance of a war which he had previously determined to abandon. Hassan, having thus despoiled and reduced the revolters, returned to Constantinople with such treasures as had not been brought thither for many years, and were alone sufficient to invigorate all the preparations for war. The conduct of the Russian ministers at the Turkish capital since the last peace, had been haughty and imperious, without exciting any strong expressions of resentment on the part of the Ottomans. Bulgakow, the ambassador, having been called to attend his mistress at Cherson, on his return repeated a set of propositions [g] which were laid down by the empress as the basis of a new treaty, and as the only means of establishing on a permanent footing the tranquillity of both empires. The general principle of the proposed contract was, the most extensive and important cessions to Russia by Turkey, without any equivalent; indeed a surrender of a great part of a territory. So dictatorial and insolent a proposal was immediately rejected: the divan, not satisfied with this absolute refusal, proposed a set of conditions, not only as the basis of a treaty, but as the only means for preserving peace. The leading article was the restoration of the Crimea, that had been usurped by Russia, with others of a similar nature; and producing a written instrument, which contained the proffered terms,

Catharine proposes extensive cessions by Turkey to Russia, as the only means of securing peace.

Turkey indignantly rejects those claims,

[g] They included, besides the admission of a Russian consul at the port of Varna, within a hundred and twenty miles of Constantinople, which had long been an object of much solicitude, a total renunciation of the sovereignty of Georgia; which, as that ill-defined denomination of territory might be extended to all the neighbouring countries, as well as to Mingrelia, would have afforded sanction to all the past and future encroachments of Russia on that side. Another proposed condition, and still harder to be admitted, was a new settlement of the provinces of Moldavia and Wallachia, by which their governors, generally called in Europe princes, were to hold them by hereditary succession, and in a great measure independent of the Porte. But the most singular claim, perhaps, of any, was that upon Bessarabia, which, as having once belonged to the Tartar khans, Russia now demanded; a principle of no very limited operation, and which, if pursued to its full length, would have made the usurpation of the Crimea a lawful title to all the conquests of Tamerlane. Annual Register, 1788, p. 9.

they

they required the Russian to sign them on the spot. Bulgakow declared his incapability of subscribing any conditions, without express orders from his mistress, and desired time for receiving instructions concerning some of the articles: but respecting the Crimea, he avowed, that he could not venture to mention such a proposal to his sovereign; and that he well knew, in no fortune, and in no circumstances whatever, could she ever be reduced to relinquish the sovereignty of that country. A barbarous custom prevailed under Turkish ignorance and despotism, of imprisoning foreign ambassadors on a rupture with their principals; accordingly, Bulgakow was sent to a castle with seven towers, allotted to alleged offenders against the state: but he was treated with much more indulgence than former captives in such circumstances had there experienced. Two days after, on the eighteenth of August 1787, war was declared against Russia. The manifesto presented to the christian ambassadors, stated the good faith [h] and the strict attention to the terms of the treaty of Kainardgi, which the grand seignior had uniformly observed; and to this conduct contrasted the continued violation of the most solemn conventions by Russia. The empress had instigated the prince of Georgia to rebellion, and supported him by her troops against the sultan his sovereign: she had deprived the inhabitants of Oczakow of the benefit of the salt mines, which not only from time immemorial had been open to them, but which were expressly stipulated by treaty to be held in common by both nations. Russia, through her agents, had endeavoured to corrupt and seduce the subjects of the Porte: she constantly interfered in the internal policy of the Turkish empire, and presumed to dictate to the sultan, insomuch that when the pachas, governors,

and declares war against Russia. Manifesto.

[h] See State Papers, August 24. 1786.

or

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or judges, by a faithful discharge of their duty, displeased her, she arrogantly demanded their removal or punishment. The complaints in the manifesto respecting commerce were equally numerous; and the whole detail endeavoured to establish, and in many cases with success, a spirit of encroachment, rapacity, usurpation, and insolence on the part of Russia. The court of Petersburgh had regarded Turkey with so much contempt, as to entertain not only no apprehension, but no idea that they would commence hostilities, and received the manifesto with astonishment. The counter-manifesto[1] was expressed in that lofty style which Russia had used since the peace of Kainardgi; and represented Turkey as holding all which she possessed by her merciful bounty exercised at that treaty: it repeated her former justification of her conduct respecting the Crimea, and, vindicating in detail her own acts, endeavoured in the usual tenor of such productions, or where argument was wanting, by bold assertion to throw the blame upon her adversary. As the season of 1787 was so far advanced before hostilities began, no very important operations took place. The Turks made several attempts on Russian fortresses, but were not successful. The Russians contented themselves with defensive efforts; reserving offensive exertions for the next campaign. During the winter the French and Spanish ambassadors made several attempts to mediate between the belligerent powers, and to procure an armistice. The grand vizier declared the proposal to be totally inadmissible, from its affording every advantage to Russia, and none to the Porte: their perfidious enemy, whose rapacity and ambition were insatiable, would gladly put them off their guard, and amuse them with a negociation, until her preparations were complete. The

Counter-manifesto of Russia.

[1] See State Papers, Sept. 13. 1787.

Porte

Porte now demanded of the Imperial ambassador, what part his master intended to take in the war? That minister, having applied for the emperor's instructions, answered by his prince's directions, that his Imperial majesty, as the friend and ally of Russia, was bound by treaty to furnish her with eighty thousand men, in case of war; that if the Porte should consider this engagement as an act of hostility, he was prepared to abide the consequences; but, on the contrary, if they should choose to maintain the good understanding which subsisted between the two empires, he would with pleasure undertake the office of mediator, in order to prevent the effusion of blood.

Joseph II. without provocation joins Russia against Turkey.

GREAT preparations were made in all parts of the emperor's dominions: four armies were ordered to be assembled; one at Carlstadt in Croatia, under the command of general de Vins; another at Peterwaradin in Hungary, commanded by general Langlois; a third on the borders of Lithuania, under general Febris; and the fourth in the Buccowine, headed by the prince of Saxe-Coburg. On the tenth of February 1788, the emperor declared war against Turkey; in his [k] manifesto there is not a single sentence asserting the least ground of complaint from Austria on her own account: the whole pretext is, that the Porte had not acceded to the reasonable requisitions of the empress of Russia, and had maltreated her envoy; that by this conduct the Porte had manifested hostile disposition to the emperor, who was in alliance with the empress of Russia. "The Porte (says this manifesto) were not unacquainted with the strict bonds of amity and alliance which unite the courts of Vienna and Petersburgh: of this occurrence they were informed, as well by verbal insinuation, as by a memorial presented towards the close of

His mighty preparations.

Manifesto of the emperor.

[k] See State Papers, Feb. 10. 1788.

the

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the year 1783. This was accompanied with an energetic representation of the nature of this alliance, and the danger of encountering its force: the Ottoman court have, therefore, themselves only to blame, if the emperor, after being for many years employed in the preservation of peace, and in his endeavours to live with them on the best terms, and after having seized upon every opportunity of amicable intervention, finds himself at length obliged by their conduct to comply with his engagements to the empress, and take a part in the war into which she finds herself so forcibly drawn." Such were the principles of morals exhibited in the emperor's declared reasons for a rupture with the Turks, from whom he did not allege that either he or his subjects had received the slightest provocation. He went to war with an unoffending nation, and plunged his own country in all the evils of hostilities, that he might fight the battles of the empress of Russia.

Commencement of the campaign.

BEFORE his declaration he began his enmity by an ineffectual attempt to surprise Belgrade, which believed itself to be still in a state of peace: six chosen regiments of imperial infantry were, at a season of peace, dispatched in two divisions to attack this fortress: by some failure in the time and place of rendezvous, the one body did not arrive speedily enough to assist the other: the first detachment formed under the fire of the garrison and town, without any prospect of being joined by the second. The Turkish governor was well prepared for their reception, and with great coolness sent a polite message to the Austrian commander, expressing his surprise at seeing, in a season of profound peace, such an appearance of troops on their territory, and in the precincts of a fortified city; only requiring farther to know the cause or motive of their coming. The Austrian leader answered, that hearing a party of Turks was preparing to surprise the neighbouring city

city of Semlin, he had advanced to counteract their scheme; but that, finding himself mistaken, he would withdraw his troops. Though the excuse was accepted, yet conscious of their own intentions, and afraid that the moderation of the Turks was only affected, the Imperialists crossed the Saave with great precipitation, and lost a considerable number of men. An attempt of the same kind was, before the termination of the peace, made by the Austrians upon the frontier fortress of Turkish Gradisca: this place they endeavoured to take by assault, but were repulsed with the loss of at least five hundred men killed and wounded.

War being now declared, both parties made dispositions for regularly commencing the campaign. The emperor applied to the court of Warsaw for leave to pass through the Polish dominions, if requisite, in order to form a junction with the Russians. The king and permanent council replied, that they had no power to grant the passage demanded, as it entirely depended on the general diet. The emperor had intended to force a passage, if refused, but found it expedient to change his resolution. He also requested the consent of the Venetians to a Russian fleet to be received into their harbours; but his requisition was absolutely refused. Notwithstanding these disappointments, the Imperial troops took the field. The emperor joined his principal army about the middle of April, being on the south side of the Danube, and about to invest the small fortress of Schabatz in Servia. The investment was deferred until the emperor's arrival, that he might have his share of the military glory that would accrue from such an achievement. The place was obviously incapable of resistance, and was easily captured. The triumph of this victory, however, was soon balanced by a check which prince Lichtenstein's army received about the same time at Dubicza. That prince having

The emperor takes the field.

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carried on his approaches regularly against the fortress, and made a breach, which he deemed practicable, resolved to attempt it by storm. The animosity of the Turks was vehemently inflamed against the Austrians: in their estimation the emperor was an officious intermeddler in quarrels which did not concern him or his territories; he endeavoured to take advantage of their recent misfortunes, and without provocation to insult and despoil those whom he conceived unable to resist his power: they considered him as invading them without even any pretence of wrong, or any other motives than those of a robber and common enemy to mankind: they were inspired with generous eagerness to make so flagrant aggression recoil on the head of its author. This indignant spirit, so merited by its object, pervaded all ranks of the Turkish host; invigorated their efforts against the Imperial armies, during the whole campaign; and turned upon the offender that defeat and disaster, which he had projected against those who were doing him no wrong. The garrison of Dubicza, being reinforced before the assault was attempted, instead of waiting for the enemy, threw open their gates, and rushing out, attacked the intrenchments, forced them sword in hand, and compelled the foes to raise the siege with the loss of two thousand men.[1] The grand vizier, who commanded the principal army in Bulgaria and Silistria, was a man of very vigorous abilities: he knew the troops under his command, and the enemy with which he had to cope: reviewing the history of former wars, and the relative character of the contending forces, he saw that, since the art of war in Christian countries had been reduced into a regular system, the Turks, devoid of discipline, were generally unsuccessful, through a prevalent impolicy of hazarding pitched battles,

Generous indignation of the Ottomans against the imperial aggressor.

Wise and skilful conduct of the vizier.

[1] See Annual Register, 1788, chap. ii.

which

which depended chiefly upon tactical skill; he, therefore, resolved to pursue a plan much more adapted to his materials: fierce as the Ottomans were in natural courage, stimulated by strong incentives, and animated by partial successes, he was fully aware that they were very much inferior to German discipline; he, therefore, resolved not to hazard a general engagement, unless absolutely necessary, but to employ the energy of his forces in attacks on posts and detachments, in which the discipline of the enemy could be of little avail. This mode of warfare would give full scope to the qualities in which the Turks excelled, and prevent the effectual operation of those in which their enemy was so superior: he thus intended to train his troops to obedience, discipline, and military skill, to give them continual opportunities of signalizing their valour in encounters with the enemy; and gradually to approach to decisive combat, as he found his forces increase in tactical knowledge and efficiency. While the inventive mind of the grand vizier was exerting itself in devising changes necessary for his object, and thus improving the means entrusted to his direction, the visionary fancy, and flimsy understanding of Joseph, was occupied in projects of reform, which tended to render his materials worse instead of better. Applying to military subjects the same general principle which distinguished his civil government, *that change is improvement,* he contrived a variety of innovations, far from being conducive to the purposes of war, and really inimical to success, because they disgusted his soldiers. After having profusely lavished his treasures in equipping mighty armies to fight the battles of another, he endeavoured to exert his œconomy by making hard bargains with dealers in corn and cattle; contrived new modes of supplying his troops with necessaries; and by these reforms reduced his armies, before

Military reforms of the emperor.

Injudicious and precipitate, they disgust his soldiers.

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the close of the campaign, to the greatest scarcity, distress, and consequently discontent. [m]

THE first considerable battle which took place after Dubicza, arose from an attack made by the Turks on the prince of Saxe-Coburg; and though, after a furious contest, they were repulsed by the arrival of an Austrian reinforcement, yet they being joined by fresh troops, renewed the engagement: for several successive days they fought with various fortune; but the Turks astonished the Austrians by their furious valour: with their spears they did not fear to meet hand to hand, the enemy with their guns and bayonets, and shewed themselves unappalled by the formidable artillery to which the Germans so much trusted. The Austrians had commenced the campaign with a thorough contempt of their adversaries, and a confident expectation, that the only difficulty they had to encounter would be from the speed of the enemy's flight; but they now underwent a total change of opinion and sentiment, and by a natural transition regarded their foes as the most terrible of mankind. Dislike to the war against an enemy who had been so much mistaken, and discontent on account of the emperor's innovations, was strongly enhanced by the resentment which they entertained against the Russians for not co-operating with the Austrian efforts: the emperor himself was irritated at the commencement of the war, so different from his sanguine hopes, and, indeed, confident declarations, and determined to venture on an exploit which had been held out as the first object of the campaign; this was the siege of Belgrade; he accordingly adopted measures for speedily carrying the project into execution. The vizier, with an army of eighty thousand men, advanced to the relief of this most important fortress, and occupied a strong position, covered by the Danube in front, Belgrade and the Saave on the

His operations are ineffectual.

[m] See Annual Register, 1788.

left,

left, the fortress of Orsova on his right, and garrisons on his rear. The Imperial army, instead of persevering in their design upon Belgrade, returned to Semlin; and the invaders acted avowedly upon the defensive: various encounters took place, in which great numbers were slain on both sides; but the loss of the Austrians was the greater. Besides war, the Germans had to contend with a still more dreadful enemy in a pestilential fever, very frequent in the Danubian lower provinces, and most destructive to armies which come from higher and more healthy countries; the inactive indolence, under which the grand army languished at Semlin, added to this distemper; as the season advanced to the sickliness of autumn, the mortality became more dreadful; and before the close of the campaign, at least the half of one of the finest armies that ever marched from the Austrian dominions, without performing a single exploit of any note, perished, partly by the sword, but chiefly by disease.

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Obliged to act on the defensive.

On the side of the Buccovine, where the prince of Coburg commanded, the war languished in the beginning of the campaign, from the failure of the Russians in effecting a junction. The object of the confederates on that side was to invest the fortress of Choczim; and a body of Russian forces arriving, at length, in the beginning of July, preparations were made for the siege: the attempt was greatly facilitated by the governor of Moldavia, who, having been before corrupted by the Russians, treacherously surrendered the country on the first approach of the enemy. The combined generals conceived the reduction of Choczim would immediately follow the investment; but they were mistaken: the seraskier, who commanded the garrison, conducted his defence with such intrepidity and skill, that, after undergoing the severest hardships for upwards of two months, he, at last, on the twenty-ninth of September, obtained a most honourable

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nourable capitulation. The capture of Choczim closed the campaign on the frontiers of Poland. The army third in force employed by the emperor, was that which acted on the side of Croatia, and had been compelled to raise the siege of Dubicza. Prince Lichtenstein's bad health having compelled him to resign the command, he was succeeded by marshal Laudohn: under this veteran officer the Austrians, dejected by the disappointment, both of the secondary and principal armies, began to recover their vigour and confidence. Laudohn made a second attempt upon Dubicza, which after a very gallant defence he compelled to surrender: he afterwards invested the fortress of Novi, which in the month of October capitulated. He proposed to close the campaign by the reduction of Gradisca, after Belgrade, the principal fortress on the north-west frontier of Turkey; but from the strength of the place, and the autumnal rains, was compelled to raise the siege. General Fabre, with the fourth army, contended with the Turks on the borders of Transylvania, where, being obliged to act on the defensive, after many bloody contests, he was so far successful as to prevent the enemy from penetrating into the country. The grand vizier, instead of imitating the quiescent example of the emperor's army at Semlin, was active in annoying the dominions of the invader. One of the most fertile portions of lower Hungary is the Bannat of Temiswar, divided by the Danube from the Turkish Servia, and the fortress of Belgrade. The vizier made bridges over the river, and sent great detachments, that he might either desolate and despoil so rich a tract of the enemy's country, or compel the emperor to leave Semlin for the protection of the Bannat, and thus expose his enfeebled army to the continual attacks of the Turkish cavalry, in a dry, firm, and open country. The Bannat is a tract, which, from the strength of its capital, and its vicinity to the

the strong posts in the mountains of Transylvania, is extremely difficult to be conquered; but having no other fortress of note, besides Temiswar, it is easy to be over-run by any army that commands the field, and is secure on the side of the Danube; therefore the vizier wisely resolved not to attempt the conquest, which would be operose and ultimately unproductive, but to over-run the country, from which the advantage to himself would be immediate, by the extreme fertility and high cultivation of the province, and the distress to the enemy would be grievous and ruinous: he accordingly put his design in execution, invaded the Bannat, and spread desolation wherever he went.

The Turks overrun the Bannat.

Dismay seizes the Imperial armies.

TERROR and dismay pervaded the Imperial armies and provinces, and even Vienna itself, when they found that, instead of those conquests for which the war had been undertaken, the richest dominions of the aggressor were now seized by the defender: they conceived that, instead of Constantinople, Vienna might again be the scene of attack. The emperor, as the vizier had foreseen, sent troops to the relief of his province; and a large division of the grand army was attacked by the Turks on the 8th of August with such fury, at Orsova, near the northern bank of the Danube, that they were defeated, and a dreadful slaughter ensued. The emperor now thought it necessary to quit his camp at Semlin, and march northward to cover Temiswar, and secure his communication with his forces in Transylvania. The vizier being reinforced with large bodies of troops, closely followed his enemy: several engagements took place, in one of which the Austrians were defeated with the loss of no less than five thousand men, and were obliged to abandon their camp with terror and dsorder, and the remainder of the forces took refuge in Temiswar and Transylvania. The autumnal rains having set in with uncommon violence, the vizier found, that

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to keep the field would be ruinous to his troops, as little inured to the extreme cold and wet, as their enemies were to the extremes of heat; and now that he had effected his purpose of doubly annoying the foe, by despoiling his richest territory, and defeating his strongest army, he re-crossed the Danube, and returned to Belgrade. At Constantinople, great as was their joy for the victories of the vizier, both the people and court were much displeased with the evacuation of the Bannat. The sultan, notwithstanding his condition, so very unfavourable to either intellectual or moral excellence, was really a prince of sagacity, prudence, and moderation. He perfectly comprehended the policy of his officer, its reasons and motives, and did justice to both. The emperor in November returned to Vienna; having, for such immense expenses, and losses, of this very bloody and destructive campaign, the ruin of so valuable a province, acquired three fortresses of little significance. Such were to Joseph the first year's consequences of unprovoked aggression.

Operations of Russia.

THE preparations of the emperor had been formed, in the reliance that a very strong force from Russia would co-operate with him on the Danube. Such had been the plan concerted between the Imperial courts, and such, as we have seen, the failure of the execution. The empress of Russia, in seeking the alliance of Joseph, had considered her own advantage solely, without any regard to the interest of her confederate: she deemed him a powerful tool, whom, by working on his weakness, vanity, and ambition, she could apply to her own use: she had left him to promote her views at his expense, by weakening her enemy on one side, while she should direct her efforts to her own sole benefit on the other. Joseph was defeated, and lavished the blood and treasure of his subjects, without any advantage to Austria; nevertheless, he thereby effectually

tually served Russia: he employed the chief Turkish force, and by his disasters, incurred with such struggles, facilitated her acquisitions. Her first object was to enlarge and secure her possessions on the Black Sea, and to form such a body of power as could not hereafter be shaken. From the immense extent of her dominions, much time must necessarily elapse before her armies, spread through the interior country, could reach the frontiers. She, meanwhile, equipt a powerful fleet, destined for the Mediterranean, and another naval armament for the Black Sea. In the former war she had experienced no hostile opposition, from any of the maritime powers, to her plan of obtaining a footing in the Mediterranean, and was by the mistress of the ocean seconded in that scheme. Now, a different plan of policy was adopted; both the maritime and other powers of Europe regarded the confederacy between the two empires, with a jealousy which increased as its objects unfolded themselves; but principally directed against the member most powerful both in resources and in personal character, and whose aggrandizement it tended chiefly to promote. The smaller states firmly resolved not to support a combination by which they themselves might be eventually crushed; the greater determined, if necessary, to oppose a confederacy by which their own independence might be endangered: what part Prussia might take could not be affirmed from either the declarations or conduct of that court, though it might be easily inferred from its interest. Spain and France were known both to be friendly to the preservation of the Turkish empire; and internal affairs only prevented the latter from manifesting her disposition in hostile interference. Holland was sounded on the occasion; her conduct, it was foreseen, would be chiefly governed by the example of England. It became a subject of great political anxiety how England was

Effect of the aggressive confederacy on the neighbouring states;

on Britain.

to

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to act in the present case: some supposed, that inspired by resentment for the hostile conduct of Russia in the armed neutrality, and her manifest indifference to friendly intercourse, more recently exhibited, she would now oppose her naval schemes: others argued, that this was the time for procuring most beneficial commercial arrangements from Russia by seconding her favourite object. Those who were most thoroughly acquainted with the present British government, concluded that it would not be determined by so contemptible a motive to public conduct as resentment, but would be guided by policy; that not confining its political estimates to mere commerical gain, it would include ultimate security, and that Britain would resume her appropriate character of protector of Europe, from whatever quarter its independence and security might be endangered. England soon manifested a determination not to second Russia. The empress had employed agents to hire British ships for serving as tenders and transports to her fleet, and a considerable number was provided for that purpose, when a proclamation in the London Gazette, prohibiting British seamen from entering into any foreign service, threw a fatal damp on the design. This was attended with a notice to the contractors for the tenders, that the engagement for shipping must be renounced; that the ships would not be permitted to proceed; and that government was determined to maintain the strictest neutrality during the war. In hopes of diminishing this great disappointment, Russia applied to the republic of Holland for a sufficient number of transports to answer the purpose; but that government refused to comply with the request, and also declared its resolution to maintain the strictest neutrality; and Catharine's expedition to the Mediterranean was laid aside. On the Black Sea the prince of Nassau commanded the Russian fleet, and the captain Pacha the

Britain resumes her character of protector of Europe;

and thwarts the imperious designs of Catharine.

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the armament of Turkey. Prince Potemkin, with an army of a hundred and fifty thousand men, approached the Euxine, on the banks of the Bog. The first object of this expedition was the reduction of Oczakow, a very strong fortress near the Bog, and on the Black Sea; which, as the frontier garrison of Turkey in that quarter, was of the highest importance in her wars with Russia, but more indispensably necessary since her ambitious adversary had occupied the adjacent Crimea. The preparations of attack and defence corresponded with the value of the object. On the 12th of July, Potemkin invested this fortress, aided by his fleet: the Turkish troops did not exceed twenty thousand men, nor, indeed, would the garrison have easily contained a greater number of defenders. During five months this gallant and intrepid band resisted the whole Russian host. In the sixth, the apparent hopelessness of effort, together with the inclemency of winter, seemed about to force the besiegers to desist from their attempt; when Potemkin, ashamed of making so little progress with so great a power, on the 17th of December, as the last effort, ordered a general bombardment and cannonade of the place with red-hot balls to commence. One of these fell upon the grand powder magazine, which, being still amply provided, blew up with so terrible an explosion, as to demolish too great a portion of the wall to admit of the fortress being any longer tenable: the Turks still made a most desperate resistance, both in the breach, and in the streets; but they were at last overpowered, and the place was taken by storm.

The Russians capture Oczakow.

While these hostilities were carrying on between the Imperial powers and the Turks in the south, war suddenly broke out against Catharine in the north. Sweden, beyond most nations, had reason to regard Russia with resentment, since by that power she had been driven from the high

State of Sweden.

place

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place which, during the seventeenth century, she had held among the powers of Europe. Fear, however, of force so enormous, had restrained the expression of resentment, and produced an apparent connection between the two countries; and there was always at the court of Stockholm a strong and numerous party favourable to Russia. It was an uniform policy of the court of Petersburgh, to govern by influence and intrigue foreign states, which they could not so easily command by power: this means of influence was carried to a much greater extent by Catharine, than by any of her predecessors. One of the chief instruments of her foreign politics, was the seduction of subjects from allegiance to princes, from whose civil dissensions she expected to derive benefit. It was, indeed, a part of her plan to weaken the executive authority in the countries which she wished to direct, that from contest there might be the more frequent occasions for her interference.[n] As the Swedish revolution, whatever its other consequences might be, strengthened the executive government, it was very disagreeable to Catharine. Although perfectly satisfactory to the lower classes, it was and continued to be, as she well knew, extremely hateful to the aristocracy, whose peculiar privileges it had entirely destroyed: thus there was a great faction in Sweden inimical to the measures of the king; and this party Russia very constantly supported. Gustavus was thoroughly acquainted with these intrigues: the Swedish king was impressed with an idea, that the liberties of the north were exposed to imminent danger from the power and ambition of Russia, and the chief object of his policy was to secure weaker neighbours against the aspiring Catharine. These sentiments he endeavoured to communicate to Denmark, and incite

Interference of Catharine in the internal politics of Sweden.

[n] See Memoirs of Catharine II. *passim.*

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that country to vigilance: meanwhile he bestowed the closest attention on the internal improvement of his own kingdom, with such effect, as justified the apprehensions entertained by Russia from the Swedish change of 1772. A prompt, firm, executive government; union and decision in the cabinet, with a tolerable degree of apparent harmony between the king and the deliberative orders of the state, succeeded to anarchy, weakness and discord; there was a good and amply supplied army, with an excellent fleet, and such a well-regulated state of finances, as would give energy to both in case of emergency. A situation of affairs so different from the wishes of Catharine, she formed various projects for embroiling, though at the same time she heaped the strongest expressions of regard on the prince, whose government she was ardently desirous of disturbing. She professed a wish to assist, with her experience and counsels, such an illustrious pupil; invited him to Petersburgh, and actually gave him advice to introduce among his subjects innovations, which, if adopted, must have rendered him unpopular. Gustavus had penetration to discern the motives of the empress; and private dislike added to public jealousy. Catharine, desirous of swaying the counsels of Sweden by her influence, was enraged with Gustavus for successfully opposing her artifices; and the Swedish monarch detested his neighbour for her endeavours to render him dependent. The design of subverting and partitioning the Ottoman empire, with the vast military preparations for carrying the project into execution, could not but increase in the highest degree the apprehension and alarm of the king: he saw by the last war the inability of the Turks to combat the power of Russia only, how then could they be supposed capable now of resisting the immense combined force of both empires? If Russia was already too formidable for the repose

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and

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and safety of her neighbours, how must she appear when clothed and armed in the spoil and force of the Ottoman empire. Distant and heterogeneous as the Swedes and Turks were, common interest had often before united them against Russia. The feebleness of the Swedish government, however, under Gustavus's father, and the revolutionary designs of the son, had prevented either from taking a part in the preceding war. Differently circumstanced now, the king of Sweden in spring armed by land and sea. The empress pretended, and to many even appeared to disregard these preparations, and did not deign to inquire into their object. She, however, replenished her magazines and forts in Finland with ammunition, troops, and provisions: she was indefatigable in exercising her usual insidious policy to stimulate and promote dissensions between the sovereign and his subjects. She had two classes in Sweden from whom she expected co-operation in her designs against its prince: the first consisted of the ancient aristocracy, which, without any attachment to Russia, submitted to her influence, in the hopes of recovering, through her, their former constitution: the second of those who, through bribery or other inducements, had really become partisans of Russia, but pretended to adopt the views of the nobility. On the former she depended as the dupes of her schemes, which they would believe beneficial to Sweden; the latter, she knew, would be the willing and ready agents of her designs, without any regard to the interest or security of their country. Through these parties she constantly relied that she would be able to subvert the present government of Sweden, and render that nation a dependency upon Russia. While her emissaries were active in spreading dissatisfaction through Sweden, and Gustavus was persevering in his equipments, the empress ordered her ambassador to deliver a memorial

She attempts to stir up revolt against Gustavus.

memorial to the Swedish ministry, which, in a very few pages, presents a sketch of that policy by which Catharine endeavoured to promote discord. Its manifest object was to stir up the subject to sedition and insurrection against the sovereign: it was not addressed to the king, to whom only, by the laws regulating intercourse between nations in the great European republic, it ought to have been addressed: it was directed to all ranks and classes of his subjects, with whom, by the law of nations, a foreign sovereign could have no ground of correspondence. This document professed the highest regard for the Swedes, represented the interest of the people as separate from those of the king, and the promotion of the former[o] as one of her principal objects. Mentioning the preparations of Gustavus, it called on the people to join with the empress in preserving the public tranquillity. A memorial so openly fomenting disobedience and disloyalty, was severely resented by Gustavus, who, in an answer, exposed its intent and tendency, and signified to Razouffsky, the Russian ambassador, his majesty's wish, that he should forthwith leave the Swedish dominions. Manifestoes and counter-manifestoes were soon after published, detailing to other powers the alleged grounds of hostilities. Gustavus immediately repaired to Finland, in order to commence warlike operations: he himself commanded the army, and his brother, the duke of Suddermania, the fleet. Various engagements took place by sea between the Swedes and Russians, in which though the former displayed extraordinary valour, and gained several advantages, yet the Russian squadron (the same that had been intended for the Mediterranean) being much greater in force, formed, directed, and commanded by admiral Greig, a British seaman, proved superior

The king resents this conduct.

War.

Military and naval operations.

[o] State Papers, June 18. 1788.

in

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in the result of the campaign, and was mistress of the Baltic. The king headed so gallant and strong an army that he entertained well-founded hopes of proving superior to all the Russian land forces that could be spared from southern operations: but in Russian intrigue he found a more formidable enemy. By the constitution of Sweden it was ordained that war should not be undertaken without the consent of the states; and the present hostilities had not received that sanction. Catharine had directed her policy to the representation and exposure of this unconstitutional deficiency, and with such success, that though the soldiers were eagerly devoted to Gustavus's pleasure, yet a great part of the officers, consisting of the ancient nobility and gentry, declared that they could not, without violating their consciences and their duty to their country, draw their swords in a war undertaken contrary to their country's laws: this refractory spirit rendered the campaign in Finland ineffective.

Refractory spirit of Gustavus's officers.

To counteract the imperial confederacy of aggression, this year a defensive alliance was concluded between the kings of Prussia and Britain, and also these princes respectively, and the States-general, by which, besides reciprocal defence, and the maintenance of the existing constitution of Holland, the contracting parties sought the general preservation of the balance of power: they guarantied each other from any hostile attack, and engaged in concert to preserve peace and tranquillity: if the one were menaced with aggression, the other, without delay, should employ its good offices, and the most efficacious means, to prevent hostilities, to procure satisfaction to the party threatened, and to settle things in a conciliatory manner: but if these applications did not produce the desired effect in the space of two months, and if one of the parties were hostilely attacked, the others undertook to defend and maintain him in all the rights and privileges,

Defensive confederacy between Britain, Prussia, and the States-general.

and territories, which he possessed at the commencement of hostilities. The general principle of this treaty was that which wise policy dictated for British interference in continental affairs, security, and the maintenance of that order and balance on which the safety and independence of Europe rested. From the general object of the treaty, the contracting parties had, no doubt, in view the imperial confederacy, which, if its progress were not checked, had so strong a tendency to endanger the tranquillity and safety of other states. The interests of England were as essentially concerned, as those of Prussia, in preventing the ascendancy of Russia and Austria.

Principle of this treaty.

Mr. Fox's project of continental alliance was to connect ourselves with Austria as in former times, that, should a war arise with France, such a powerful enemy might divide her attention, and prevent it from being, as in the late war, chiefly directed to maritime affairs. Mr. Pitt's plan was to form continental alliances according to existing situations: France was at present engaged in no scheme of policy likely either to affect the general safety of Europe, or to provoke England to a war; she was, indeed, deeply occupied in plans for remedying the evils of former ambition: what system of alliance might be wise in circumstances not existing, nor likely to recur, was a question of speculation rather than immediate practicable policy. The emperor was so involved in the projects of Catharine, that an alliance with him would be difficult, and indeed impracticable, except at the expense of adopting his partialities, and seconding the attempts of Russia. In the formidable combination between these two powers, that nation became naturally the ally of Britain, which had a common interest with Britain in watching the conduct and preventing the aggrandizement of the parties; besides, Prussia, together with England,

Different views of Mr. Fox and Mr. Pitt on this scheme of alliance.

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was closely connected with the constitutional party in Holland: however just, therefore, Mr. Fox's reasoning might be, if it were applied to situations that very frequently occurred in our history, yet, in the present circumstances, alliance with Prussia was more valuable to England, than with any other great power.

Internal occurrences. Retirement of lord Mansfield from the king's bench.

DURING the recess, that illustrious sage, who had so long presided over the judicial decisions of his country, in the eighty-fourth year of his age, thought that many years of labour, without reproach, might be followed by a few years of rest, and retired from the judicative bench. For comprehending the law of this particular country, William Murray, a man of the most acute and extensive genius, had prepared himself by a profound study of history, general ethics, the philosophy of jurisprudence, investigation of human passions and conduct, and the civil law, on which the judicial institutions of so great a part of modern Europe are founded. On this basis he raised his superstructure of knowledge of the English code: to the depths of legal science, the accuracy and extent of juridical details, he added the pleasing and impressive accomplishments of an engaging, graceful, and persuasive eloquence. From such an union and extent of qualifications, Mr. Murray very early rose to most distinguished practice. With such opportunities of observing the circumstances of society, of civil actions and engagements, and criminal perpetrations, his penetrating and comprehensive mind saw that the progress of social, and especially commercial intercourse, was producing new combinations, which had not been specifically foreseen when the laws applied to such subjects were enacted; therefore he inferred, that the essential principles of justice required such a latitude of interpretation, as would render existing laws applicable to the new cases. The intelligent reader must know

Improvements under his judicative supremacy, especially in mercantile laws.

know that there are two great standards of judicial interpretation; the one the authority of custom, decision, and statute, according to literal definition; the other, according to the general principles of equity, construing particular law, unwritten or written, in such a way as best to answer the great ends of justice. The learned reader must recollect, that at Rome two sects of civilians arose from the above-mentioned difference; the Proculians and the Sabinians [p], taking their names from two eminent jurists. The first of these, resting entirely on authority and definition, merely considered the letter of the law: the second, interpreting more freely, endeavoured to adapt it to their conceptions of justice in the case. Each of these modes has advantages and disadvantages: by the former the parties may know the exact rule by which their dispute will be tried, but may find the literal judge difficulted in applying his rule to their case; or entangled by precedents, forms, and definitions, unable to solve the question agreeably to substantial justice: by the latter the parties may, from a just and competent judge, expect an equitable determination of the question; but they depend on his individual understanding and integrity. By deviating from literal explanation, in the progress of construction the law may be changed; and thus the judge may become a legislator. During the republican periods of the Roman law, strict and rigid interpretation of usages and decrees prevailed: during its imperial history, latitude of construction was gradually substituted. When Tribonian and his associate civilians digested the laws into one great body under Justinian, its constructive character predominated: hence, modern jurists, whose legal doctrines have owed a great part of their formation to the civil law, have interpreted freely. The close precision of

Strict and liberal interpreters of law, their respective advantages and disadvantages.

[p] See account of Justinian's Code, Gibbon, vol. vi.

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English reasoning has diffused itself through municipal institutions, and combining with the English accurate sense of justice, has, in the great body of the law, made so specific provisions for all cases, when the laws were enacted, likely to occur, that it may be safely advanced as a general position, that in every question within the knowledge, foresight, and intent of our lawgivers, the more nearly the decision follows the letter of the law, the more fully will the purposes of justice be answered: but when combinations of engagements and conduct arise, which lawgivers have not specifically anticipated, and on which the judge is called to give decision, he must apply the constructive character of the civil law. The personage before us, partly from his education, in a great measure from having to meet subjects of judicial inquiry, to which neither decisions nor decrees could precisely apply; and, perhaps, also partly from that powerful and comprehensive genius, which in seeking its ends might less regard customary details than adequacy of means, verged more to a constructive than literal interpretation: but his judgments were just; they repaired injury, compensated losses, and punished crimes; they confirmed civil rights, repressed vice, supported virtue, promoted the order and tranquillity of the society. The most fertile sources of new cases, during the long judicial supremacy of this eminent judge, were commerce with its subordinate arts and instruments. In considering the various and diversified contracts of this kind, which neither precedents nor statutes could solve, lord Mansfield recurred to a very simple principle of ethics; that, where the terms of covenants do not precisely ascertain the extent and obligations, general custom is the most equitable rule of construction. This principle he applied to delivery of goods, insurances, wharfages, bottomry, and an infinite diversity of mercantile and maritime transactions. In the great depart-

Lord Mansfield of the latter kind.

Principle of his decisions in undefined and unprecedented cases.

department of commercial jurisprudence, this illustrious judge formed a code of decisions, digested into a complete system, and may well be styled the JUSTINIAN OF COMMERCIAL LAW. Lord Mansfield, with a sagacity almost intuitive, apprehended the scope, unravelled the intricacies, and understood the nature of a case; discerned whether it was common or new; and if new, by what general principle or analogy of law its merits were to be ascertained. In his charges to juries, he made the evidence and arguments on both sides, and their comparative force, so very clear, and also the reasons and rules on which he formed his judgment, that every hearer of common understanding must be master of the cause, and of the judge's view of the cause; and as his principles of judgment, the result of combined knowledge and wisdom, were uniform, by hearing one charge or decision, you were assured of the decision which he would give in any similar case. The acute penetration of this sage was very happily exerted in eliciting truth from unwilling witnesses; and in the course of his judicial services he was very successful in repressing, not only a great variety of individual attempts at perjury, but in preventing the commission of that crime in certain classes of subjects, in which it was before universally prevalent.[q] This judge, thoroughly comprehending, not only the general object, but the special compartments of his office, very carefully distinguished between the duties of a civil and criminal magistrate. In the former rela-

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He is the Justinian of English commercial law.

[q] Especially custom-house questions, and justification of bail. In the former instance the incredibility of oaths was proverbial; in the latter it was customary for persons to attend in Westminster-hall, on the first day of term, offering to bail any person who wanted their services, and to swear themselves to have property to any amount requisite for that purpose. A person who had not five pounds in the world, frequently bailed to the amount of ten thousand pounds in a term. His lordship, having discovered this practice, examined those bondsmen so closely, as to the disposal of their alleged property, that he drove them from that kind of traffic. From his time the perjury of fictitious bail has been discontinued, to the great security of property, and reformation of morals.

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tion he confined his consideration, at least so far as it dictated his charge to juries, to the *damage sustained by the plaintiff*, without adducing the conduct of the defendant as a reason for enhancing damages beyond the actual injury, the reparation of which was, and must be, the sole ground of a *civil* [r] *action*. He did not confound redress for a private wrong with punishment for a public wrong; but by keeping the administration of civil and criminal justice separate, as intended and prescribed by law, he most effectually answered the purposes of both. Lord Mansfield was frequently reproached with attempting to increase the influence and power of the crown, and was, as we have seen, exposed to great obloquy from factious demagogues, who directed and inflamed the populace at the time: but on investigation it was found, that his opinions on the law of libels were those that had been received by former lawyers and judges; that if not precisely correct, they were by no means of his invention, but adopted on very eminent authority. With talents to excel in any department, professional excellence was what lord Mansfield chiefly sought, and sought with the greatest success. As a politician his lordship aspired not to the eminence which his abilities could have so easily attained; and he never was a leader. The measures which he supported during various periods, especially the administration of lord North and his predecessors, were not those on which his character for wisdom could be founded. As an orator he shone brightly, but not unrivalled; though equalled by few, he was

General character.

[r] This judge was severely blamed for having stated, in his charge to the jury on the trial of the duke of Cumberland, at the instance of lord Grosvenor, that the rank or condition of the defendant did not entitle the plaintiff to any increase of damages. It was alleged by party writers, that lord Mansfield wished to screen a prince of the blood; but the real and fair interpretation is, that in a civil action the plaintiff applies for the redress of a certain injury; that the injury done, and that only, is to be considered in an award of damages.

by

by one surpassed. The engaging and graceful persuasion of a Murray yielded to the commanding force of a Pitt. But as a judge he earned the highest fame, by combining philosophy and detail; by instantaneously and completely apprehending the case; and by accurate discrimination, which, though deviating somewhat from the letter of the laws, bounded his constructions by the lines of equity and justice. In him you could not always find his precedents in the law reports, or his rules in the statutes at large, when neither would apply; but you must recognise his principles and criteria of determination in the immutable laws of reason and rectitude. Lord Mansfield's procedure on the bench was, on the whole, the best that could be adopted by himself, or any other judge of consummate wisdom: how far as a general model, it ought to be followed by all judges, might be a matter of doubtful inquiry. Perhaps, on the whole, unless a judge be uncommonly sagacious and able, literal interpretation, keeping as closely as possible to precedent and statute, if in some cases it may be an obstacle to what is completely right, yet in a much greater variety is a preventive of wrong.

His lordship was succeeded by Lloyd Kenyon, who, by professional ability and industry, had risen to be master of the rolls; and now, being chief justice of the king's bench, was called to the house of peers by the title of lord Kenyon.

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Distemper of the king — assumes an alarming appearance. — Peers and commons assemble on the day appointed for the meeting of parliament. — Adjourn for a fortnight till the fact be ascertained. — Physicians being examined, agree that a temporay incapacity exists. — Houses meet to prepare for a supply. — Mr. Pitt moves an inquiry into precedents. — Mr. Fox declares, that in such circumstances the heir apparent has a right to exercise the executive power. — Mr. Pitt contends that the right of supplying the deficiency is in the people, through their representatives. — Lord Loughborough, with some distinctions, agrees with Mr. Fox. — Mr. Fox explains his doctrine, which Mr. Pitt still controverts. — Question brought to issue. — Determined that the supply of the deficiency rests with the houses of parliament. — Mr. Pitt proposes that the chancellor shall be empowered to put the seal to a commission for opening parliament. — After a violent debate, carried. — Frederick, duke of York opposes administration. — Mr. Cornwal dying, Mr. Grenville is chosen speaker. — Mr. Pitt's plan of regency — is submitted to the prince of Wales. — His highness expresses his disapprobation and reasons, but deems it incumbent on him to accept the office. — Second examination of the physicians. — Hopes of his majesty's speedy recovery. — Mr. Pitt's plan of regency laid before parliament. — Principle; that the power delegated should answer without exceeding the purposes of the trust. — Details and restrictions. — Scheme reprobated by opposition. — Arguments for and against. — Princes of the blood all vote on the side of opposition. — Warm praise and severe censure of, by the respective parties throughout the nation. — Impartial estimate of its merits. — Irish parliament addresses the prince to assume the regency of Ireland. — Favourable turn of his majesty's distemper. — Convalescence. — Complete recovery. — Universal joy throughout the nation. — His majesty goes to St. Paul's to return thanks. — Festive rejoicings. — Renewed application for the repeal of the test and corporation acts. — Chief sects and most eminent

nent men of the dissenters. — Proposed relief from the penal laws against non-conformists — opposed by the bishops. — Refused. — Slave trade. — Mr. Wilberforce's motion for the abolition. — Arguments for, on the grounds of religion and humanity. — Consideration postponed to the next session. — Mr. Grenville appointed secretary of state, — Mr. Addington speaker of the house of commons. — Financial scheme. — A loan required (according to the minister) from a temporary cause. — Mr. Sheridan disputes his calculations. — Bill for subjecting tobacco to an excise. — Popular clamour against this bill. — Passed into a law. — Progressive prosperity of India stated by Mr. Dundas. — Slow progress of Mr. Hastings's trial. — Motions respecting it in the commons. — Session rises.

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THE close of the present year was marked by a signal calamity which befel this nation; but, dreadful as was its first aspect, terrible and afflicting the fears of its continuance, proving only temporary, grief and dismay for its existence were speedily overwhelmed in joy for its removal.

Distemper of the king

THE vigorous constitution and temperate habits of our sovereign, now in the prime of his life, appeared to promise to his people the long duration of a reign directed to their happiness: contemplating his countenance and form, with natural health, invigorated by exercise, and secured by regularity of living, his people confidently expected, that the paternal goodness, which for twenty-eight years they had experienced, would, after twenty-eight years more, be still exerting itself for their benefit; but the prospect was now overcast.

IN the latter end of autumn all ranks were alarmed by a report that his majesty was seriously indisposed. On the twenty-fourth of October resolved, notwithstanding illness, to perform the functions of his royal office, he held a levee; and though it was obvious to every one present, that his majesty's health was very materially affected, yet no symptoms indicated any definite species of malady. On the king's return

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assumes an alarming appearance.

return to Windsor, his distemper assumed a very alarming appearance; it was found that it had formed itself into a brain fever, attended with a delirium, so often resulting from that dreadful disorder. The mental derangement having continued to the beginning of November, without any intermission, at length became public; and the intelligence diffused grief and consternation among his loyal and affectionate subjects. The prince of Wales repairing to Windsor to the queen, these personages were attended by the lord chancellor, and concerted measures for the management of his majesty's domestic affairs in the present emergency. Meanwhile, all those who, by their rank and situation in the state, were required to take a part in so new and unexpected an exigence, assembled in the capital. Mr. Fox had spent part of the recess in Switzerland; to him, as a man from whose extraordinary abilities most beneficial advantage was expected, an express was immediately dispatched, and he hurried to England. The twentieth of November was the day on which the prorogation of parliament was to expire; and the meeting took place as a matter of course. The peers and the commons remained in their separate chambers; the chancellor in the upper, and Mr. Pitt in the lower house, notified the cause of their assembling without the usual notice and summons, and stated the impropriety of their proceeding, under such circumstances, to the discussion of any public business; and both houses resolved unanimously to adjourn for fifteen days. Mr. Pitt observed that, if his majesty's illness should unhappily continue longer than the period of their adjournment, it would be indispensably necessary for the house to take into immediate consideration the means of supplying, as far as they were competent, the want of the royal presence; it was, therefore, incumbent upon them to insure a full attendance, in order to give

The peers and commons assemble on the day appointed for the meeting of parliament.

They adjourn for a fortnight till the fact be ascertained.

give every possible weight and solemnity to their proceedings: for this purpose it was ordered, that the house should be called over on Thursday the fourth of December, and that letters should be sent, requiring the attendance of every member: orders to the same effect were issued by the lords. On the day before the appointed meeting, the physicians who had attended his majesty were examined by the privy council, and the three following questions were proposed and answered: First, Is his majesty's state of health such as to render him incapable of meeting parliament, or attending to public business? The answer of all was, He certainly is incapable. The second question respected the probability of a cure, and the duration of the illness: they concurred in the probability of a cure, though they could not limit the time. The third question was, whether the physicians judged from general experience, the particular symptoms of his Majesty's case, or both? The most frequent answer was, From general experience; but Doctor Willis, who entered more minutely on the subject, in his answers, than the other physicians, stated the circumstances which he deemed favourable to a speedy recovery. It was afterwards agreed by both houses, that the physicians should be examined by committees composed, as nearly as possible, of an equal number of members from both parties. It being ascertained that a temporary incapacity existed, Mr. Pitt, in order to pave the way for a supply, moved, that a committee should be appointed to examine the journals and report precedents from similar or analagous cases. Mr. Fox objected to a committee for such a purpose, as nugatory and productive of unnecessary delay: Mr. Pitt (he said) knew there was in the journals no precedent to be found of the suspension of executive government, where there was at the same time an heir apparent of full age and capacity:

Physicians being examined, agree that a temporary incapacity exists.

The houses meet to prepare for a supply. Mr. Pitt moves an inquiry into precedents.

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city: he himself was fully convinced, upon the maturist consideration of the principles and practice of the constitution, and of the analogy of the common law of the land, that whenever the sovereign, from sickness, infirmity, or other incapacity, was unable to exercise the functions of his high office, the heir apparent, being of full age and capacity, had as indisputable a claim to the exercise of the executive power, in the name and on behalf of the sovereign, during the continuance of such incapacity, as in case of his natural demise[a]: the prince himself, from the peculiar delicacy of his situation, had not made the claim, but there was no doubt that it was his right to supply the place of his father. Mr. Pitt combated this doctrine, as totally inconsistent with actual history and the spirit of the constitution: there were, he admitted, no precedents applicable to this specific cause of incapacity; but whatever disability had at any time arisen in the executive branch, as the history of the country shewed, had been supplied by parliament. When the regular exercise of the powers of government was from any cause suspended, to whom could the right of providing a remedy for the existing defect devolve, but to the people, from whom all the powers of government originated? To assert an inherent right in the prince of Wales to assume the government, was virtually to revive those exploded ideas of the divine and indefeasible authority of princes, which had justly sunk into contempt, and almost into oblivion. Kings and princes derive their powers from the people, and to the people alone, through the organ of their representatives, did it appertain to decide in cases for which the constitution had made no specific or positive provision. On these grounds Mr. Pitt insisted that the prince had no more RIGHT to be appointed

Mr. Fox declares, that in such circumstances the heir apparent has a right to exercise the executive power.

Mr. Pitt contends that the right of supplying the deficiency is in the people, through their representatives.

[a] See Parliamentary Debates, Dec. 10. 1788.

to supply the existing deficiency, than any other subject; though he admitted that, in the present case, *expediency* dictated that parliament should offer him the regency: substitution of another to execute the office of a king, during a temporary incapacity, was merely a measure of necessary policy: it was incumbent on legislature to entrust the authority to such person or persons as it should deem most likely to answer the purpose: after these observations, the question being put, it was carried that a committee should be appointed to search for precedents.

Lord Loughborough, with some distinctions, agrees with Mr. Fox.

In the house of peers, Lord Loughborough supported the position which Mr. Fox had advanced, and adduced great legal ingenuity and acuteness to prove, that the right ascribed to the prince was a corollary from the act of settlement, the general analogy of English law, the privileges and immunities peculiar to the prince, and belonging to no other subject. He admitted, however, that the exercise of this right ought not to commence until parliament had declared the sovereign's incapacity.

Mr. Fox explains his doctrine, which Mr. Pitt still controverts.

Mr. Fox at the next meeting of the commons, made an explanation of his meaning, agreeable to Lord Loughborough's interpretation, and said, that his expressions on a former day had been misrepresented: his position, which he was still ready to maintain, was, that the houses of parliament had the right to adjudge the fact of incapacity, but on such adjudication the heir apparent had the right of holding the reigns of government whilst the incapacity lasted: as, however, Mr. Pitt agreed with him, that in the present circumstances the prince was the person who ought to hold that office, it would be much more prudent to abstain from discussing so nice and subtle distinctions. Mr. Pitt replied, that he differed as much from Mr. Fox respecting the question of right, now that he had explained his meaning, as before

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before such an explanation. Mr. Fox (he said) now asserted, that the prince of Wales had a right to exercise the royal authority, under the present circumstances of the country; but that it was a right not in possession, until the prince could exercise it on what he called the adjudication of parliament. He on his part denied that the prince of Wales possessed any right whatever, and upon that point Mr. Fox and he were still at issue. This was a very important question, and must be decided before they could proceed any farther; there might be differences of opinion whether any regency was necessary as yet, and a difference of opinion might arise, if necessary, what were the powers requisite to be granted to the regent? but nothing could be determined till the matter of right should be discussed. He not only challenged Mr. Fox to adduce either precedent or law to support his doctrine, but actually shewed from history that such a claim of right had been made, and had been resisted by parliament. In the reign of Henry VI. the Duke of Gloucester, next heir to the crown[b], claimed the regency during the minority of the king, and applied to parliament; the answer to this claim was, that he neither had by birth, nor by the will of his brother, any right whatever to the exercise of royal authority: they, however, appointed him regent, and entrusted him with the care of the young king. At the revolution, parliament proceeded on the same general principle; the king had ceased to act; to supply this deficiency, parliament acted as legislators: they did not restrict themseleves to a simple address to the prince of Orange to accept the crown; they felt not only that they must have a king, but they must have a king on certain terms and conditions: they did what amounted to a legislative act: they came to a resolution to settle the

[b] After the death of prince John of Lancaster, duke of Bedford.

crown,

crown, not on the prince of Orange and the heirs of his body, nor on the princess Mary and the heirs of her body, but on the prince and princess jointly. Here it was evident that, whatever the necessity of the case required at that time, the lords and commons possessed the power to provide for it, and consequently, whatever the necessity of the case demanded at present, the power belonged to the lords and commons to supply the deficiency. Parliament could have no possible interest in acting in any other way than as duty prompted and wisdom directed; and as it was agreeable to history, reason, and expediency, that they should provide for a specific object, it became them, in making the provisions, to extend or contract the trust to be delegated according as they thought either necessary for its execution. Thus, according to Mr. Pitt, precedent confirmed the analogy of the constitution, and both concurred with the expediency which required that the peers and the representatives of the people should provide for supplying an unforeseen deficiency.

The question brought to issue.

HAVING grounded his doctrine on these arguments and facts, concerning the right which Mr. Fox had asserted to be vested in the heir apparent, Mr. Pitt proposed on the sixteenth of December three resolutions[c]: the first stating his majesty's present

[c] The following are the resolutions: 1st, That it is the opinion of this committee, that his majesty is prevented, by his present indisposition, from coming to parliament, and from attending to public business; and that the personal exercise of the royal authority is thereby for the present interrupted: 2dly, That it is the opinion of this committee, that it is the right and duty of the lords spiritual and temporal, and commons of Great Britain, now assembled, and lawfully, fully and freely, representing all the estates of the public of this realm, to provide the means of supplying the defect of the personal exercise of the royal authority, arising from his majesty's said indisposition, in such manner as the exigency of the case may appear to require: Resolved, "That for the purpose, and for maintaining entire the constitutional authority of the king, it is necessary, that the said lords spiritual and temporal, and commons of Great Britain, should determine on the means whereby the royal assent may be given in parliament to such bill as may be passed by the two houses of parliament, respecting the exercise of the powers and authorities of the

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present unfitness for performing the functions of the kingly office: secondly, that the lords and commons had the right to provide for that case, and were in duty bound to make such provisions: thirdly, that the lords and commons should determine on the most effectual means of exercising their right, by vesting the powers and authority of the crown on behalf of the king during his majesty's illness. Several amendments were proposed; without detailing these, it is sufficient to mention that their object was to address the prince of Wales, heir apparent, and of mature age, beseeching him to take upon himself the administration of the civil and military government of the country, during the indisposition of his majesty, and no longer. The admission of this proposition would have precluded every limitation of the kingly power, thus to be entrusted to a regent. Its supporters contended, that every part of the royal authority and prerogative was necessary for the discharge of kingly duties; if the regent were not entrusted with the whole power, he could not perform all the duties. By its opponents it was answered, that the situation for which they were called to provide was, from the concurrent testimony of the most competent witnesses, only temporary; the supply wanted, therefore, was also temporary. Various parts of the royal establishment belonged to the splendour and dignity of the crown, more than to its power or its executive functions. So much authority as was necessary to enable the regent to act as executive magistrate, during the illness of the sovereign, should be conferred, but no more. The bounds and circumscriptions necessary upon this principle would be

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the crown, in the name, and on the behalf of the king, during the continuance of his majesty's present indisposition." See Parliamentary Reports, Dec. 1788.

matter

matter of cautious consideration to parliament, according to all the circumstances of the case. Such restrictions would be impossible if the present amendment were adopted. Parliament was to reflect on the present as a general question that would be a guide to future ages: they were to form measures for insuring the restitution of his power to the principal, when a substitute was no longer necessary; and in making this provision they were to consider men as men are generally found. Cases might arise, in which, if an heir obtained possession, he might be unwilling to return to expectancy; or, though an heir were ever so dutifully disposed himself, he might be misled by evil counsellors. No character could be more meritorious or more worthy of confidence than the present prince of Wales. Constitutional policy, however, proceeds not upon individual merits, but on general expediency. Every part of the principal authority was not wanted to the efficiency of the substitute. Why should they confer on a delegate any more power than was necessary to answer the purposes of the delegation? Our sovereign possessed as much power as was consistent with a free government, and no more: the regent was, by the scheme of ministers, to possess as much as was consistent with the object of his temporary office, and no more; there was no disrespect offered to the regent by a circumscription applying to the particular circumstances, as there was no disrespect to our kings in the circumscriptions affixed to their authority by the constitution. In both cases the principle was the same: princes are men, and fallible like other human beings; let them be invested with all the authority which is conducive to the public welfare, and restrained from that which might be prejudicial. Mr. Pitt informed the house, that he intended, if the resolutions should be adopted by the commons, and also meet

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the concurrence of the lords, to propose, that the lord high chancellor should be empowered to put the great seal to a commission for opening the parliament in the usual form; and that as soon as a bill should be passed by both houses for providing for the exercise of the royal authority, under certain limitations, during his majesty's indisposition, another commission should be sealed for giving to such act the royal assent. This project was very strenuously opposed: first, as unnecessary; because, all parties concurring unanimously in opinion that the prince of Wales should be invested with the regency, the procedure by address or declaration was the most simple, and the most consonant to the practice and constitutional functions of the two houses: the measure was unwarrantable; in fact it altered an essential part of the state; it made the two houses KINGS. To fix the form of a legal sanction on their proceedings, they were to give fictitiously a royal assent, but in reality their own assent to their own acts. If the houses assumed to themselves powers which belonged to the legislature, and proceeded to legislate, they would act in direct violation of the spirit of the constitution; even to a positive act of parliament, the 13th of Charles II., which expressly declared, that the two houses could not make laws without the king: after a long debate the resolutions were voted. Having passed the house of commons, they were introduced to the lords by the chancellor, and similar amendments were proposed. In the debate which ensued on that occasion, the question of right was resumed; an active part was taken by their royal highnesses the princes, and particularly by his majesty's second son, Frederic duke of York.

Determined that the supply of the deficiency rests with the houses of parliament.

THIS illustrious youth received the first part of his education in his native country. Destined for the military profession he was afterwards sent to Germany, and spent several years in his own bishopric

Frederic duke of York opposes administration.

bishopric at Osnaburg, and his royal father's electoral dominions: thence he repaired to the court of Berlin, and completed his military education under the system which the Prussian hero had established. Eminently distinguished for manly beauty and graces, in natural endowments, and acquired qualifications, he was one of the most accomplished princes of the age: having the strongest fraternal affection for his elder brother, between whom and him the closest intimacy from their childhood had enhanced the sentiments of relation, on coming back to England he chiefly associated with the prince of Wales, and becoming acquainted with the companions of that exalted personage, he, in a considerable degree adopted their political opinions. "No claim (said his highness) has been made by my royal brother; I am confident the prince too well understands the sacred principles which seated the house of Brunswick on the throne of Great Britain, ever to assume or exercise any power not derived from the will of the people, expressed by their representatives, and your lordships in parliament. On this ground, I hope, the house will avoid pressing a decision which certainly was not necessary to the great object expected from parliament, and which must be most painful in the discussion to a family already sufficiently agitated and afflicted: these (continued his highness) are the sentiments of an honest heart, equally influenced by duty and affection to my royal father, and by attachment to the constitutional rights of his subjects; and I am confident, that if my royal brother were to address you in his place, as a peer of the realm, these are the sentiments which he would distinctly avow." Though the peers warmly approved of the general sentiments expressed by his highness, and of the dignified manner in which they were delivered, yet the majority thought it necessary, since the question of right had once been

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started, to have it fully discussed; and the resolutions were carried by a considerable majority. A strong protest was entered against agreeing to these resolutions, and signed by the dukes of York and Cumberland, and forty-six other peers.[x] These proceedings of the house occupied the greater part of December. On the 29th of the month Mr. Cornwall, speaker of the house of commons, was seized with a dreadful illness, which, four days after, the 2d of January, 1789, ended in his death. The house meeting on the 5th, Mr. William Grenville was proposed by the friends of ministers as his successor, and sir Gilbert Elliot by opposition: the election was carried in favour of the former by a majority of two hundred and fifteen to one hundred and forty-four.

Mr. Cornwall dying, Mr. Grenville is appointed speaker. 1789.

THE preliminary subjects having been discussed by both houses, Mr. Pitt, before he explained his plan of regency to parliament, submitted its outlines to the prince in a letter, wherein he offered either to attend his highness, should any farther explanation be required, or to convey such explanation in any other mode which the prince should signify to be most agreeable. This letter, sent on the 30th of December, stated the plan to be that which, according to the best judgment which they were able to form, his majesty's confidential servants had conceived proper to be proposed in the present circumstances: the outlines were, that his highness should be empowered to exercise the royal authority, in the name and on the behalf of his majesty, during his majesty's illness, and to do all acts which might legally be done by his majesty. The care of his majesty's person, the management of the household, and the direction and appointment of the officers and servants therein should be in the queen, under such regulations as might be thought

Mr. Pitt's plan of regency is submitted to the prince of Wales.

[x] See their names, State Papers, Dec. 29, 1788.

necessary.

necessary. The power to be exercised by his highness should not extend to the disposal of either real or personal property of the king (except in the renewal of leases), to the bestowal of any pension, the reversion of any office, or any appointment whatever, but during his majesty's pleasure, except those granted by law for life; that his highness should not be empowered to confer the dignity of the peerage on any person except his majesty's issue who had attained the age of twenty-one years. This plan, the letter declared, was formed on the supposition, that his majesty's illness was only temporary, and would be of no long duration. It would be difficult to fix beforehand the precise period for which these provisions ought to last; but should his majesty's recovery be protracted to a more distant period than there was then reason to expect, the consideration of the plan, according to the exigency of the case, would be open to the wisdom of parliament. [y]

His highness expresses his disapprobation and reasons, but deems it incumbent on him to accept the office.

On the 1st of January an answer was delivered by his royal highness to the lord chancellor to be conveyed to Mr. Pitt. Respecting the measures already embraced by parliament, his highness declared he would observe a total silence: no act of the lords and commons could be a proper subject of his animadversion: but (he said) when, previously to any discussion in parliament, the outlines of a scheme of government are sent for his consideration, in which it is proposed that he shall be personally and principally concerned, and by which the royal authority and the public welfare may be deeply affected, the prince would be unjustifiable were he to withhold an explicit declaration of his sentiments: his silence might be construed into a previous approbation of a plan, the accomplishment of which, every motive of duty to his father

[y] See State Papers, Dec. 30, 1788.

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and sovereign, as well as of regard for the public interest, obliges him to consider as injurious to both. The scheme communicated by Mr. Pitt, is a project for producing weakness, disorder, and insecurity, in every branch of the administration of affairs: a project for dividing the royal family from each other; for separating the court from the state; and therefore, by disjoining government from its natural and accustomed support, a scheme for disconnecting the authority to command service, from the power of animating it by reward; and for allotting to the prince all the invidious duties of government, without the means of softening them to the public by any one act of grace, favour, or benignity. These positions the prince adduced detailed arguments to support: the plan (he proceeded) was not founded on any general principle, but was calculated to infuse groundless jealousies and suspicions in that quarter, whose confidence it should ever be the first pride of his life to merit and obtain. With regard to the object of the limitations, his majesty's ministers had afforded him no light; they had informed him *what* powers they meant to refuse him, but not WHY they were to be withheld: he deemed it a fundamental principle of this constitution, that the powers and prerogatives of the crown are vested there, as a trust for the benefit of the people; and that they are sacred only as they are necessary to the preservation of that poise and balance of the constitution, which experience has proved to be the true security of the liberty of the subject: but the plea of public utility ought to be strong, manifest, and urgent, which calls for the extinction or suspension of any one of those essential rights in the supreme power or its representative. If security were wanted, that his majesty should re-possess his rightful government whenever it pleased Providence to remove his present calamity, the prince would be the first to urge the adoption of measures conducive

ducive to that purpose, as the preliminary and paramount consideration of any settlement in which he would consent to share: if attention to what his majesty's feelings and wishes might be on the happy day of his recovery were the object, the prince expressed his firm conviction, that no event would be more repugnant to the feelings of his royal father, than the knowledge, that the government of his son and representative had exhibited the sovereign power of the realm in a state of degradation, curtailed authority and diminished energy; a state hurtful in practice to the prosperity and good government of his people, and injurious in its precedent to the security of the monarch, and the right of his family. The provision respecting the king's property was totally unnecessary, as that was perfectly secured, during his majesty's life, by the law of the land. The prince having discharged, as he conceived, his indispensable duty in giving his free opinion on the plan submitted to his consideration, concluded with declaring, in the following terms, his reasons for accepting, notwithstanding the objections he had enumerated, the proffered trust: His [z] conviction of the evils which may arise to the king's interests, to the peace and happiness of the royal family, and to the safety and welfare of the nation, from the government of the country remaining longer in its present maimed and debilitated state, outweighs, in the prince's mind, every other consideration, and will determine him to undertake the painful trust imposed upon him by the present melancholy necessity (which of all the king's subjects he deplores the most), in full confidence, that the affection and loyalty to the king, the experienced attachment to the house of Brunswick, and the generosity which has always distinguished this nation, will carry him through the many difficulties inse-

z The letter is written in the third person, See State Papers, Jan. 1. 1789.

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parable from this critical situation, with comfort to himself, with honour to the king, and with advantage to the public.

Such was the substance of the letter written by the heir apparent on this momentous subject, and though great numbers did not assent to his highness's conclusions, concerning the inexpediency of the proposed restrictions, yet every judge of composition and argument allowed that it was a very masterly performance.

Second examination of the physicians.

On the 6th of January, when Mr. Pitt was about to propose his plan of regency to the house of commons, Mr. Loveden, member for Abingdon, moved, that, as the intended limitations would have a reference to the state of his majesty's health, and several weeks had elapsed since that had been ascertained, the physicians should be again examined. After a very warm debate, including a considerable share of personal altercation, it was agreed that a new committee should be appointed, and that the physicians should be interrogated. The result of the examination was, that his majesty's recovery continued probable. The proceedings of the committee having occupied about a week, the report was brought up on Tuesday the 13th of January, and appointed to be taken into consideration the following Friday. On the 16th Mr. Pitt opened his plan to the house: the subject (he said) divided itself into three distinct heads: first, the nature of the king's illness: secondly, the principles upon which the two houses were authorized to act on this occasion: and thirdly, the application of those principles to the measures which he should propose, of remedying the present defect in the personal exercise of the royal authority. From the recent examination, they were confirmed in the conclusions drawn from the former, that his majesty was by his illness rendered incapable of attending to the business of his station; but that

Mr. Pitt's plan of regency is laid before parliament.

it was probable he might recover, and once more be able to resume the reins of government. In these two points all the physicians were agreed; they were not all equally sanguine in their hopes of his majesty's recovery: it was, however, extremely satisfactory, that the expectations of the several physicians were respectively favourable, in proportion to their knowledge of that particular distemper and that individual case: the deficiency for which they were called to provide was temporary, and would probably be short. The principles by which the houses were to proceed, arose from the nature and probable duration of the deficiency; they were to provide for the present necessity only, and to do no more than it required; they were also to guard against any embarrassment in the resumption of the royal authority, and therefore to grant such powers only as were requisite for the government of the country with energy and effect. On these principles he had framed his plan, of which the outlines were exhibited in his letter to the prince of Wales. The regent was to exercise the whole royal authority, subject to restrictions which were intended not to interfere with executive efficiency. The limitations were reducible to four heads: first, that the power of his highness should not extend to the bestowal of the peerage, except to his majesty's issue that had attained twenty-one years of age. To prove the propriety of this limitation, Mr. Pitt adduced three grounds upon which this prerogative was entrusted by the constitution to the crown: first, it was designed to enable the king to counteract the designs of any factious cabal in the house of lords: secondly, to enable the sovereign to reward eminent merit: thirdly, this power was designed to provide for the fluctuations of wealth and property in the country; by raising men of great landed interest to the peerage, that branch of the legislature would be always placed upon its true and proper

Principle; that the power should answer without exceeding the purposes of the trust.

Details and restrictions.

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proper basis: for none of these objects was this prerogative wanted in the present case; there was no probability that any such cabal should now be formed to obstruct the government of his royal highness: on the other hand, if this power were conferred on the regent, such a number of peers might be created, as would greatly embarrass the government of his majesty on his restoration to health: as a reward of merit, or a nobilitation of property, the suspension of this prerogative, during the *temporary* incapacity which they were supplying, could be attended with no material inconvenience: should the unfitness prove more permanent than they expected, parliament could extend the regent's power as far as might be then deemed necessary for the public welfare. On the same principle was founded the second restriction, by which the regent was not empowered to grant any pension or place for life, or in reversion, except such offices as are by law held for life, or during good behaviour: the powers restrained were not necessary to the executive government, temporarily to be held by the regent; and their exercise might be injurious to the government of his majesty on his recovery. The third restriction, respecting the king's personal property, he scarcely thought necessary; but as they were acting on parliamentary principles, and endeavouring to make their provisions as comprehensive as possible, he accounted it his duty to make this regulation a part of his plan. The fourth resolution was intended to entrust the sovereign's person, during his illness, to the guardianship of the queen: he proposed to put the whole of his majesty's household under her authority, investing her with all powers to dismiss and appoint as she should think proper: unless she held this control, the queen could not discharge the important trust committed to her care: a council should be named to assist the queen with advice, but without any power of control:

Arguments for

trol: trustees should be appointed to manage the real and personal estate of the king, but should have no power of disposing of any part of it, except by lease. The propositions were very strenuously supported, both upon the arguments which the minister himself adduced, and on others. The law-officers maintained, as a fundamental doctrine, that the king's political character was, in the eye of the law, inseparable from his personal; that it remained entire and perfect, and would continue so to do until his natural demise; and to this principle frequent reference was made in the course of the debates. The senator who vindicated the plan of Mr. Pitt, in the most extensive details, elaborate research, and accurate induction, was Mr. Grenville, the new speaker: in the committee this member took an opportunity of delivering his opinion; and for near three hours both occupied and engaged the attention of the house. His oration on the subject stated every historical fact, explained and enforced all the arguments of precedent, law, and constitutional analogy, by which the proceedings of the ministers were justified; and also endeavoured to combat each and all objections which they encountered. From the constitutional history of the country he attempted to demonstrate, that the principle on which our ancestors both conferred and bounded the powers of a regent were the same that were now applied. It was proposed on the one hand to establish a form of government capable of conducting the public business; and on the other, to provide complete and ample security to enable the sovereign to resume the exercise of his authority, fully, freely, and without embarrassment, when the existing deficiency should terminate. Keeping this principle uniformly in view, he applied it to the various restrictions, and contended, that the extent of the delegation was sufficient for the energetic useful execution of the trust, and that the bounds were

Speech of Mr. Grenville.

necessary

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necessary to the security of resumption. The propositions were opposed on the following grounds; they tended, it was affirmed, to debilitate and humble the executive government, by stripping it of its legal prerogatives: the power of bestowing peerages was an integral part of the royal authority, a shield that, from its earliest days, the constitution had provided for its own defence and preservation; and which could not be wrested from the crown without bringing destruction on our polity. Mr. Fox, with his wonted energy, impugned the doctrine of the law officers, concerning the inseparability of the king's personal and political character: he wished (he said) to hear this doctrine explained; for how that person, whose political faculties were confessedly suspended by a severe visitation of Providence, could still exist in the full enjoyment of his political character, was beyond his understanding to comprehend: the doctrine seemed, indeed, to be founded on those blind and superstitious notions, by which, as they all knew from history, human institutions had been, as it were, deified; and which were inculcated for the purpose of impressing a strong and implicit reverence of authority in the minds of the multitude: while the supporters of this doctrine took up the superstitions of antiquity, they rejected their morality; they enveloped the sacred person of the king with a political veil, which was calculated to inspire awe and secure obedience; but laboured to enfeeble the arms of government, to cripple it in all its great and essential parts, to expose it to hostile attack and to contumely; to take from it the dignity which appertained to itself, and the use for which it was designed towards the people. He reprobated with peculiar severity the restrictions which were proposed on the creation of peers: Mr. Pitt had conferred that rank upon no less than forty-two persons during the five years that he had been in office; and he had not the

pretext

pretext of saying that any cabal was formed to thwart his measures in the house of lords, which made such a promotion necessary; and if such were the means to which he had been obliged to resort, surrounded with all the power and influence of the crown, what must be the condition of those who should have to contend, in the crippled state to which they would be reduced, against an opposition armed with so large a portion of the usual patronage of government. He expressed his indignation and abhorrence of a project that placed in a state of competition persons so nearly connected by blood, by duty, and by affection, and thereby excited that mutual jealousy which, in some degree, is inseparable from the human mind: how much (he said) had they to answer for, who, with a perfect knowledge of this weakness of human nature, wickedly and wantonly pursued a measure which might involve the empire in endless distractions. To these objections ministers replied, that though the prerogatives proposed to be withheld from the regent were necessary for the sovereign, they were not indispensably requisite to a temporary substitute: the regent was to possess the supreme direction of the ordnance, army, and navy; the power of making war, peace, and alliances; the choice of his ministers, and all subordinate officers; the appointment of bishops and judges: such authority was sufficient for a temporary exercise of the executive functions, though restrained from promotions and donations; the influence of which, lasting after the trust had terminated, might have disturbed the government of the rightful holder. These were the grounds on which Mr. Pitt, his co-adjutors and supporters replied to the objections of the other party, on the restriction concerning peerages. The resolution, vesting in the queen, instead of the regent, the appointment and direction of the household officers, was opposed upon more special grounds:

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it withheld a power from a responsible, to confer it on an irresponsible person; tended to establish in the empire a fourth estate, against which Mr. Pitt had exerted himself so successfully a few years before; and was calculated to excite discord between the members of the royal family. If the nomination of attendants were withheld from the regent because it was dangerous to trust him with such appointments, the remedy was inadequate to the disease; for the army and navy could not be very harmless engines in the hands of a man, to whom it would not be safe to trust the nomination of lords and grooms of the bed-chamber.[a] Ministerial speakers replied, that it was unanimously agreed the royal person should be entrusted to her majesty; the disposal of the household was necessary for her execution of that trust: besides, the officers in question, though a proper and becoming part of the state and splendor of a monarch reigning over a great and opulent people, were not necessary to the energy of the executive government during its temporary delegation: on these grounds the resolutions were supported and opposed in both houses: they were at last carried; and it was voted, that the prince and queen should be informed of the measures of legislation. On the 30th of January the resolutions were presented

[a] Lord North, declining in years, and afflicted with blindness, took a very active share in opposing the plan of regency, and fully showed, that the appropriate excellencies of his eloquence, ingenuity of argument, promptness of reply, and brilliancy of wit, were still undiminished. Expatiating upon the arguments stated in the text, the minister (he said) strains at a gnat, but swallows a camel: he is not afraid to delegate the great functions of the executive power, but he startles at the small: take the patronage, take the disposal of the civil, political, and military appointments, but keep away from the court: command the navy and army, but abstain from the household troops: let the houses of parliament become executive, as well as legislative; break down the barrier of the constitution, cripple the sovereign power: all this you may do, but touch not the pages, grooms of the stole, gentlemen ushers, or lords of the bedchamber. This, said his lordship, reminds me of the stories with which my old nurse used to entertain me about the achievements of witches; they could ride through the air, agitate the elements, raise the wind, bring rain, lightning, and thunder: all this they would do without flinching, but if they came to a *straw*, there they boggled, stumbled, and could proceed no farther.

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to these illustrious personages by a committee of peers and commoners. The answer of his highness was similar in substance to the concluding parts of his letter to Mr. Pitt, which are already embodied in this narrative. Her majesty's answer was to the following effect: "My lords and gentlemen, my duty and gratitude to the king, and the sense I must ever entertain of my great obligations to this country, will certainly engage my most earnest attention to the anxious and momentous trust intended to be reposed in me by parliament. It will be a great consolation to me to receive the aid of a council, of which I shall stand so much in need, in the discharge of a duty wherein the happiness of my future life is indeed deeply interested, but which a higher object, the happiness of a great, loyal, and affectionate people, renders still more important." The answers being communicated to the houses, it was moved in the house of lords, that letters patent should be issued under the great seal, empowering certain commissioners to open and hold the king's parliaments at Westminster.[b] The arguments already adduced on this subject, by both parties, were frequently repeated; and the names of the proposed commissioners were read, and at their head were the prince of Wales, the duke of York, the dukes of Gloucester and Cumberland. The duke of York, rising, said, he had not been informed that it was intended to insert his name in the commission; he, therefore, had not been able to take steps to prevent the nomination: not wishing to stand upon record, and to be handed to posterity as approving such a measure, he could not sanction the proceedings with his name: his opinion of the whole system adopted was already known: he deemed the proposition, as well as every other that had been embraced respecting the same object, to

Princes of the blood all vote on the side of opposition.

[b] See Parliamentary Reports.

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be unconstitutional and illegal: he desired, therefore, to have no concern with any part of the business; and requested that his name, and the name of his brother the prince of Wales, might be left out of the commission: the duke of Cumberland desired his own name and the duke of Gloucester's might also be omitted: accordingly the princes were left out of the nomination. The resolution being carried, was on the 2d of February adopted by the commons; the following day the houses assembled as a regular parliament, and, the lord chancellor being indisposed, earl Bathurst, president of the council, opened the causes of the present meeting, and the objects for which they were to provide. On the 6th of February Mr. Pitt introduced his regency bill, founded on the principles already investigated, and the resolutions already voted. Its various clauses and provisions having undergone in detail much opposition, it was passed on the 12th of February, carried to the house of lords, and read a second time without opposition.

Regency bill.

Her majesty, knowing the anxious concern that his subjects felt for their beloved sovereign, with the most considerate goodness gratified them by sending to St. James's daily accounts of the state of his health, as ascertained by the opinion of his physicians. For some days these reports announced that his majesty's illness had begun to take a very favourable turn, and aroused all ranks of his subjects with the most pleasing and sanguine expectations. On Thursday the 9th of February the lord chancellor, as soon as the peers assembled in order to go into a committee on the regency bill, informed them, that the improvement of the king's health, already stated in the official reports of the physicians, was still progressive; an intelligence which certainly must prove pleasing to every man in the kingdom: in this situation of things he conceived they could not possibly proceed upon the bill

Recovery of the king.

bill before them; and therefore moved, that their lordships do immediately adjourn to Tuesday next the 24th. On the day appointed the chancellor informed the house, that he had that morning attended his majesty by his own command, and found him perfectly recovered; he therefore moved a farther adjournment, which being again repeated, his lordship on the 5th of March informed the peers, that his majesty would signify his farther pleasure to both houses on Tuesday the 10th of March: and thus ended the necessity and project of a regency.

Warm praises and severe censures of the plan of regency throughout the nation.

THE plan of regency received the warmest praises and severest censures from the supporters of the respective parties throughout the kingdom. By the one, Mr. Pitt was represented as having again saved the country from the domination of an ambitious faction, which, if restored to power, might not have been easily displaced; that the prince, intelligent and well disposed as he was himself, was so much guided by these counsellors as to excite apprehension, lest at their instigation he might act differently from what his own mind would prompt and dictate. By the other it was alleged, that Mr. Pitt's object was to restrict the regent so much, as to render it necessary for him to come to some terms of accommodation with those who should oppose his present favourites; that his purpose simply was, by retaining a considerable portion of the kingly influence in hands favourable to his measures, to secure the means of re-establishing in office himself and his friends; that the restraints designed for the prince were inconsistent with the energetic exercise of the executorial functions; that they were justifiable on no general principle, as every part of the kingly prerogative was necessary for its constitutional purposes; that they implied an injurious doubt and suspicion concerning the character and probable conduct of the prince;

CHAP. XLI. and were personally and individually insulting as well as unjust to his highness.

1789. Impartial estimate.

IMPARTIAL observers, probably, will neither altogether agree in the panegyric nor the reproach. From history, as well as the general principles of the constitution, it appears that it belongs to parliament as representatives of the people, to provide for any exigency which was not foreseen or described by the law of the land; that parliament has exercised this power, and that its exertions have been beneficial. Mr. Fox's first position was a theory which neither experience nor analogy supported: his explanatory doctrine, declaring the prince's right, on a parliamentary adjudication of the case, equally wanted the support of experience or analogy. Concerning the competency to provide a remedy in the existing exigency, the opinion of Mr. Pitt seems to rest on more logical and conclusive reasoning than the opinion of Mr. Fox: but as it was evidently expedient that the heir apparent should be the regent, the power to be conferred ought to be as much as was necessary for answering the purposes of the appointment: he was for the time to supply the want of the kingly office. It is difficult to conceive that the acting chief magistrate could perform the official functions necessary for the good of the country, without the full prerogative, unless by a supposition totally inconsistent with the constitution, that the crown possessed prerogatives not necessary for the good of the subject. That any difficulty could arise in the resumption of his office by the rightful holder, when it should please Heaven to restore his health, was an hypothesis containing an union of many and great improbabilities: that the heir apparent should desire to obstruct the resumption, could only be apprehended on a supposition that the prince was totally deficient of filial duty, loyalty, and patriotism; in short, of every virtue becoming his

his station: such a notion had evidently no foundation in his conduct; that, intending well himself, he might by his advisers be misled to so great a degree, would be impossible, unless on a supposition that he himself was totally deficient in point of judgment and common intelligence, which was well known to be quite contrary to the truth. Reviewers of the conduct of the party which he countenanced, though they might disapprove of many of their acts and measures, could find nothing in the history or character of lord Loughborough, the duke of Portland, lord North, and Mr. Fox, that could render it likely that they would counsel such an obstruction: but if the prince and these illustrious supporters should propose or attempt such measures, how were they to be put into execution? were the legislature and the nation to join in the scheme? without their concurrence, such a disloyal and undutiful attempt would be impracticable, and would discover infatuated folly as well as desperate wickedness in its authors. Vigilant caution to guard against such improbable dangers would be a superfluous and idle exercise of deliberative policy. In fact, from Mr. Pitt's scheme it is evident that no such fears were seriously entertained: the most efficient engine of power, the command of the national force, was to be put into the regent's hands. The chief object of restriction was the bestowal of titles, the distribution of donative, either in pensions or appointments equivalent to pensions: the subtraction of these measures of influence from the intended regent, it was morally certain, in the circumstances of the case, would be an accession of influence to the proposer of the restrictions: unbiassed examination, therefore, without questioning Mr. Pitt's *motives* to have been pure, loyal, and patriotic, in his project of regency, cannot avoid perceiving that the manifest *tendency* of his restrictive clauses was to secure considerable influence to

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his own party: such an opinion is certainly no imputation on the character of a statesman; it merely supposes that he was a lover of power, and preferred an administration composed of his political friends, to an administration composed of his political adversaries. But whatever may be the opinion formed of the restrictions designed to be imposed on the prince regent, we may safely conclude, that the principle of ministers, respecting the right of supplying a deficiency in the executive government, was the most agreeable to the history and spirit of the constitution.

The Irish parliament addresses the prince to assume the regency of Ireland.

THE Irish parliament on this occasion exercised that independent political power which it had so recently ascertained, and adopted a plan totally opposite to the project of the British senate, and similar to that which had been in England proposed by Mr. Fox. A motion, supported by Mr. Grattan, and opposed by Mr. Fitzgibbon, with other eminent speakers, was carried without a division, for presenting an address to the prince of Wales, requesting him to take on himself the government of Ireland during his majesty's incapacity. A similar address was voted in the house of peers; and on the 19th of February, both lords and commons waited on the lord lieutenant with their address, and requested him to transmit the same, his excellency returned for answer, that, under the impressions he felt of his official duty, and of the oath he had taken, he did not consider himself warranted to lay before the prince an address, purporting to invest his royal highness with powers to take upon him the government of that realm, before he should be enabled by law so to do, and therefore was obliged to decline transmitting their address to Great Britain. After the answer was discussed in parliament, it was resolved that, his excellency the lord lieutenant having thought proper to decline to transmit to his royal highness George prince of Wales

Wales the address of both houses of parliament, a competent number of members should be appointed to present the said address to his royal highness: the resolution was carried in both houses: the duke of Leinster and earl Charlemont were appointed commissioners on the part of the peers; the right honourable Thomas Conolly, right honourable J. O'Neil, the right honourable W. B. Ponsonby, and J. Stuart, esqrs. were appointed commissioners on the part of the commons. These gentlemen soon after departed for England, but the auspicious recovery of our king rendered their purpose unnecessary. CHAP. XLI. 1789.

On the 10th of March, the commons having attended at the bar of the house of lords, the chancellor informed them that his majesty, not thinking fit to be then present in his royal person, had caused a commission to be issued, authorising the commissioners, who had been appointed by former letters patent, to hold the parliament, to open and declare certain farther causes for holding the same. The commission being read, the chancellor, addressing the houses in the name of the commissioners, acquainted them that his majesty, being recovered from his late severe indisposition, and enabled to attend the public affairs of his kingdom, had commanded him to convey his warmest acknowledgements for the additional proofs which they had given of their affectionate attachment to his person, and of their zealous concern for the honour and interests of his crown, and the security and good government of his dominions. Since the close of the last session, the king had concluded a defensive alliance with Prussia, copies of which would be laid before the house: his majesty's endeavours were employed, during the last summer, in conjunction with his allies, in order to prevent, as much as possible, the extension of hostilities in the north; and to manifest his desire

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of effecting a general pacification, no opportunity would be neglected on his part to promote this salutary object; and, in the mean time, he had the satisfaction of receiving from all foreign courts continued assurances of their friendly disposition towards this country. Addresses of congratulation and thanks were moved in both houses, and unanimously voted: an address to the queen was also proposed, and carried with the same unanimity.

Joy diffused through the nation on the recovery of their beloved monarch.

So great was the joy which diffused itself through the metropolis and the nation, that for several days scarcely any thing was attended to, but expressions of delight for the recovery of their sovereign. Conscious as his subjects were of their affection and veneration for their king, they had never known how dearly they loved his goodness, how highly they prized his virtues, until grief for his calamity, and the dread of its consequences, disclosed to them the poignancy of their feelings. Confident as our king was of being beloved and valued by his subjects, yet occasion had not fully manifested to him the force, extent, and intenseness of their affections, until they had exhibited themselves in universal delight that he was, as it were, risen to them from the dead. Perhaps the annals of history do not record a more sincere, tender and general concern of subjects in the welfare of a sovereign, than displayed themselves in the affliction, gloom, and despondency of Britons, when his majesty's illness was known, and before the probability of recovery was declared, the anxious and eager hopes that sprang from the opinions of the physician most conversant in such maladies; and the ardent expectation that arose from the reports of beginning convalescence; these sentiments increasing with the augmented probability of approaching recovery, until the completion of the cure turned hope and expectation into the strongest

strongest joy. Nor were external testimonies wanting to correspond with the gladdened feelings of the people: all ranks and all individuals vied with each other in rejoicings; invention was roused to devise emblems expressive of the general sympathy; and taste was employed in superadding grace and decoration to the efforts of genius which were employed to promote and heighten the prevalent passion. Illuminations received a new character, and, in addition to former mechanism, exhibited fancy, ingenuity, and design. It was not a mere blaze of light, but in many places light exhibiting a happy resemblance of the painter and sculpture's skill, and in some even of the poet's art.

His majesty goes to St. Paul's to return thanks.

His majesty was desirous of publicly testifying his gratitude to the Supreme Being for the late signal interposition of his benignant providence in removing the illness with which he had been afflicted: with this view he appointed a thanksgiving, and resolved for the greater solemnity to go to St. Paul's cathedral, there to return thanks to almighty God for his merciful goodness: the 23d of April was the day fixed for the purpose; and a more splendid exhibition has rarely met the public eye. The procession began with the commons, as representatives of the people of Britain; at eight o'clock the members set off in their carriages, followed by their speaker in his state-coach; preceded by the masters in chancery and judges, next came the peers, the younger baron first, and the lord chancellor in his state coach closing this part of the procession: afterwards came the princes, escorted by parties of horse-guards. Their majesties set out from the queen's palace soon after ten o'clock, in a coach drawn by eight cream-coloured horses, followed by their royal highnesses the princesses, and proceeded along Pall Mall, and through the Strand, amid the loyal acclamations of

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a prodigious concourse of people. At Temple-bar his majesty was met by the lord mayor in a gown of crimson velvet, by the sheriffs in their scarlet robes, and a deputation from the aldermen and common councilmen, (being all on horseback,) when the lord mayor surrendered the city sword to the king, who having returned it to him, he carried it bare-headed before the monarch to St. Paul's. His majesty, being come to St. Paul's, was met at the west door by the peers, the bishop of London, the dean of St. Paul's (bishop of Lincoln), and the canons residentiary. The sword of state was carried before his majesty by the marquis of Stafford into the choir, when the king and queen placed themselves under a canopy of state, near the west end, opposite the altar. The peers had their seats in the area, as a house of lords; and the commons in the stalls. Divine service[c] being finished, the procession returned in the same order: the whole spectacle was extremely magnificent, and, viewed in combination with its objects and cause, was admirably calculated to strike every beholder of feeling and reflection with mingled joy, gratitude, and piety.

Festive rejoicings.

VERY splendid galas were given by many individuals on the auspicious occasion: the most sumptuous and magnificent was exhibited by the princess royal at Windsor; the whole disposition of the entertainment, but especially the emblematical figures, did great honour to the taste and ingenuity of its lovely and accomplished author; dresses, of which the principal characteristic was UNIFORMITY, ex-

[c] The prayers and litany were read and chanted by the minor canons: the Te Deum and anthems, composed for the occasion, were sung by the choir, who were placed in the organ loft, and were joined in the chorus, as also in the psalms, by the charity children, in number about six thousand, who were assembled there, previous to his majesty's arrival: the communion service was read by the dean and residentiaries, and the sermon preached by the lord bishop of London, from Psalm xxvii. 16.—"O, tarry thou the Lord's leisure; be strong, and he shall comfort thine heart; and put thou thy trust in the Lord." See Annual Register, 1789. Appendix to Chronicle, p. 249.

hibiting

hibiting gracefulness and loyalty, with a beautiful variety of finely fancied ornaments, exemplified Hutchinson's doctrine on the constituents of beauty.

The French and Spanish ambassadors also gave entertainments on the same auspicious occasion; that which was exhibited by the former, both in magnificence and splendor, in beauty of decoration [d] and ingenuity of device, approached nearest to the princess's gala.

Parliamentary proceedings.

Private and public congratulations occupied, without interruption, the first week after the re-establishment of our sovereign's health was announced; and it was the middle of the second before parliamentary business was resumed. On the 18th of March a plan, formed by the master-general of the ordnance, for fortifying the West India islands, was submitted to the house of commons; and after undergoing considerable discussion, on the same grounds as that of the former year, was adopted. A tax imposed upon shops some years before, at the instance of Mr. Pitt, and assessing them in proportion to the rent of the dwelling-house of which they made a part, had been found to fall heavily on the metropolis and other great commercial towns, where the rents of houses are necessarily high. It had been intended by legislature, that the tax should fall ultimately upon the customers; but shopkeepers alleged this object to be impracticable: they represented it as partial and oppressive, and Mr. Fox had repeatedly on these grounds applied for a repeal. This year he renewed his motion, and the house, without admitting the grievance to the alleged extent, yet wishing to

[d] This entertainment was given in a very large and magnificent house, which the ambassador occupied in Portman-square. Among the devices was the following: on each side of the grand saloon was a transparent painting; that on the right of her majesty representing the genius of France congratulating the genius of England on the recovery of the king, an excellent likeness of whom the goddess of health held in her hand.

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satisfy so numerous and useful a body, consented to adopt the motion; and a bill for the purpose was introduced, and passed both houses unanimously.

Renewed application for the repeal of the test and corporation act.

On the 8th of May Mr. Beaufoy again moved for the repeal of the test and corporation act, which he supported by the same arguments that he had used two years before; and was also opposed on grounds that had been formerly employed; and his motion was rejected by a majority of one hundred and twenty-two to one hundred and two. One of the principal objections to the desired repeal was, that certain classes of dissenters not only maintained principles contrary to the fundamental tenets of our faith, but declared intentions inimical to our establishment: there were other bodies of dissenters that differed from the church of England merely respecting forms: it was thought by many who belonged to neither, that if the sectaries of the latter kind had drawn a strong line between themselves and the sectaries of the former, they more readily might have experienced the indulgence of legislature. The first of these classes might be compromised under the general name of calvinists or presbyterians; they branched in a great measure from the church of Scotland, were orthodox in all the essential articles of our religion, and well affected to our constitutional establishment: the second may be comprehended under the general term of unitarians or socinians, heterodox in their opinions concerning the Trinity, the divinity of Christ, the necessity of an atonement, and other important articles of christian belief: they were, besides, inimical to our ecclesiastical establishment, and many of them by no means friendly to our political constitution: here was a very important difference; but there were reasons which prevented the calvinistical dissenters from exhibiting the distinction between themselves and the unitarians. If the presbyterians had

had the constitutional principles, the unitarians in their number comprehended the abler men: the great talents and learning of Drs. Price and Priestley had diffused their respective sentiments through many ingenious young men, not only originally of their own cast, but others bred in the strictness of presbyterian orthodoxy. It was, indeed, natural for young non-conformists, who were either really able, or aspired at the reputation of literary talents, to follow the admired genius of the heresiarchs, rather than associate with the less splendid, though more useful, teachers of the orthodox dissenters. The presbyterians possessed many respectable and some eminent preachers, well fitted for the real business of a clergyman to afford religious and moral instruction to a congregation[c]; but they had no Price or Priestley fitted to form great political plans, or execute great political undertakings: they did not possess the literary activity which, by circulating arguments in favour of the dissenters, through periodical works, tended to render their cause popular. From the general mass of sectarian literature and exertions, they expected they, in common with the rest, would ultimately obtain their wish: separated from such co-adjutors, their efforts, they knew, must be comparatively feeble, and, therefore, concluded would be unavailing: they never tried the experiment.

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A FEW days after this motion, lord Stanhope proposed a bill "for relieving members of the church of England from sundry penalties and disabilities, to which by the laws now in force they were liable, and for extending freedom in matters of religion to all persons (papists only excepted), and for other purposes therein mnetioned." He presented to their

Proposed relief of non-conformists against penal laws,

[c] Except Drs. Price and Priestley, I do not at present recollect among the socinian and republican schismatics any persons of transcendent genius and profound erudition, or who could with justice be affirmed to surpass Drs. Fordyce and Hunter, and other presbyterians who are still alive.

lordships

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lordships a sketch of all the penal laws enacted upon religion, sorcery, and various other subjects: he insisted that it was both unjust and disgraceful to suffer these to remain amongst our statutes: he proposed, therefore, that they should be repealed; that all persons (papists excepted on account of their dangerous and persecuting principles) should possess the free exercise of their faith, and by speaking, writing and publishing, be permitted to investigate theological subjects; by preaching and teaching to instruct persons in the duties of religion, in such manner as they should judge the most conducive to promote virtue, the happiness of society, and the eternal felicity of mankind. The bill was strongly opposed by the bishops, as tending to sweep away all order and subordination in religion, and to substitute fanaticism; to unloose the bonds of society, and, under pretence of establishing religious liberty, to open the door to every species of licentiousness, neglect, and even contempt of christianity. Dr. Horsley admitted the absurdity of some of the penal laws, and their total inapplicability to the present circumstances of society; but he objected to the bill, as he thought it would tear up the church of England from the root; and as the destruction of an ally must necessarily affect the interests and existence of the principal, it would tend to destroy the very being of the English consitution: the bill was rejected at the second reading.[f]

is opposed by the bishops,

and rejected.

Slave trade.

By a vote of the last session, the consideration of the slave trade having been postponed to the present, the commons intended to have resumed it

[f] Lord Stanhope, replying to the bishops, said, that if the reverend bench would not suffer him to load away their rubbish by cartfuls, he would endeavour to carry it off in wheel-barrows; and if that mode should be resisted, he would take it away with a spade. Having soon after some conversation respecting the exaction of tithes from quakers, in which he differed from the chancellor, lord Stanhope said, I shall teach the noble and learned lord law, as I have this day taught the bench of bishops religion. See Parliamentary Debates.

early,

early, but the unforeseen business which occupied the attention of parliament, from November to March, rendered it impossible to take it into consideration, until the season was too far advanced for fully discussing such an extensive and complicated subject. The privy council had persevered in investigating the facts; from them a large and elaborate report was presented to the house, and several petitions, both for and against the proposed abolition of the slave trade, were submitted to their consideration. On the 12th of May Mr. Wilberforce introduced a set of resolutions, amounting to twelve, which he deduced from the report of the privy council. Africa (he said in his prefatory speech) was a country divided under many kings, governments, and laws: a great portion of that region was subjected to tyrannical dominion; men were considered merely as goods and property, and articles of sale and plunder like any other mercantile wares. The kings and princes had been purposely inspired with a fondness for our commodities; they waged war on each other, and ravaged their own country, in order to procure thereby the captivity and disposal of their countrymen; and in their courts of law many poor wretches, though innocent, were condemned to servitude. To obtain a sufficient number of slaves, thousands were kidnapped and torn from their families and their country, and sentenced to misery. All these assertions (he said) were verified by every history of Africa, and now confirmed by the report of the privy council. He considered the subject, first, as a question of humanity; and secondly, of policy. From the evidence before the council it appeared, that the number of slaves carried away from Africa, on an average of four years, amounted to thirty-eight thousand annually: of these by far the greater part was brought from the inland country, and at a great distance from the coasts. According to the information

Mr. Wilberforce's motion for the abolition.

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information that had been received, the persons purchased for slaves consisted chiefly of four classes: first, prisoners taken in war: secondly, persons seized for debt, or on account of real or imputed crimes, particularly adultery and witchcraft, in which cases the whole families of the captives were frequently vended for the profit of those by whom they were condemned: thirdly, domestic slaves sold for the emolument of their masters, at the will of their owner, and in some places on being condemned by them for real or imputed crimes: fourthly, persons made slaves by various acts of oppression, violence, or fraud, committed either by the princes and chiefs of those countries on their subjects, or private individuals on each other; or by Europeans engaged in this traffic. The trade carried on for the purpose of slaves had a necessary tendency to cause frequent and cruel wars among the nations; to produce unjust convictions and aggravated punishments for pretended crimes; to encourage acts of oppression, violence, and fraud; and to obstruct the natural course of civilization and improvement in those countries. He considered the subject next on the ground of policy: the continent of Africa furnished several valuable articles peculiar to that quarter of the globe, and highly important to the trade and manufactures of this kingdom. For the slave trade, there might be substituted an extensive commerce, which would equal the profits of that traffic, and would probably increase with the civilization and improvement that would proceed from the abolition of such a barbarous and depopulating merchandize. The infectious distempers arising from the confinement of the negroes rendered the slave trade more destructive to British seamen, than other kinds of commerce on the same coasts, or in equally torrid latitudes. The mode of conveying blacks from Africa necessarily exposed them to many grievous sufferings,

ings, which no regulation could prevent: on their passage, and in the West Indies, before they were sold, great numbers perished, and proportionably diminished the value of the cargo: diseases prevailed with peculiar severity among negroes newly imported, and the number of deaths far exceeded the usual mortality of natives. The natural increase of population among negroes in our plantations was impeded by the inequality of the sexes in the importations from Africa; the general dissoluteness of manners, and the want of proper regulations for the encouragement of marriages, obstructed the nourishment of healthy children; hence, he concluded, that if we obviated the causes which had hitherto obstructed the natural increase of negroes in the West Indies, and established regulations respecting their food, health, and labour, without diminishing the profits of the planter, no inconsiderable or permanent inconvenience would result from discontinuing the farther importation of African slaves. All impartial hearers, or readers capable of comprehending and appreciating Mr. Wilberforce's view of the slave trade, whatever their opinions might be concerning the evidence on which he grounded his reasoning, agreed in esteeming the present speech and propositions the ablest, fullest, and most masterly exhibition of the reasons for abolishing the traffic, that had been presented on that important subject. The defenders of the traffic did not then enter minutely into the question, but, confining themselves to some general animadversions, postponed a detailed answer to the following session; to which period it was settled that farther consideration should be deferred: meanwhile, the bill brought in by sir William Dolben, for regulating the transportation of slaves from Africa to the West India islands, was by another act continued and amended.

The question is postponed to the following session.

In the beginning of June, lord Sidney resigned the

Mr. Grenville is

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the office of secretary of state for the home department, and Mr. Grenville was appointed to supply his place. The speaker's chair being thus vacant, Mr. Henry Addington, member for Berkshire, was proposed for that office by the friends of the ministers, and sir Gilbert Elliot by opposition: the election was carried in favour of Mr. Addington, by a majority of two hundred and fifteen to one hundred and forty-two. On the 11th of June, Mr. Pitt opened to the house his financial scheme for the year: the permanent income declared necessary by the committee of 1786 to defray the annual demands, was 15,500,000*l.*; for the last two years the income had exceeded that sum 78,000*l.*, but the expences of the preceding year, the armament, the discharge of the prince of Wales's debts, the sums bestowed on the loyalists, and other unforeseen contingencies, had greatly exceeded the usual peace establishment: from these causes the total amount of the supplies required for the current year amounted to 5,730,000*l.*, besides the annual renewal of exchequer bills: the minister informed the house, that to provide this supply, in addition to the usual resources, a loan for a million would be necessary: this sum he proposed to borrow on a tontine, by which means the incumbrance would in time be removed without any permanent augmentation of the public debt. As the necessity of the loan arose, not from a defalcation of income, but from temporary increase of expenditure, the minister contended, that no fair argument could be adduced from it, tending to discredit accounts that our finances were flourishing, or to diminish the probability of reducing the national incumbrances. To pay the interest of four and a half per cent. for the sum now borrowed, and also to supply the deficiency of 56,000*l.* incurred by the repeal of the shop-tax, Mr. Pitt stated, that new taxes would be wanted to the amount of 100,000*l.*; for this purpose

appointed secretary of state, and Mr. Addington succeeds him as speaker.

Financial scheme.

A loan is required (according to the minister) from a temporary cause.

pose he proposed to add one halfpenny to the stamp duties on every newspaper, and sixpence additional on each advertisement; fresh duties also upon cards and dice, upon probates of wills, and upon horses and carriages. The ingenuity of Mr. Sheridan endeavoured to establish the following propositions: that, for the three last years, the expenditure has exceeded the income two millions, and may be expected to do so for three years to come: that no progress has hitherto been made in the reduction of the public debt: that there is no ground for rational expectation that any progress can be made without a considerable increase of the annual income, or reduction of the expenses. The committee had declared, upon a comparison between the income and expenditure, that the former would be adequate to the latter without a loan; a loan had, however, taken place. The committee had declared that the annual income would amount to a specific sum; but on an average of three years there had been a deficiency: that the expenditure exceeded the income he endeavoured to prove from calculating probabilities, instead of detailing items; and adopted the same hypothetical mode of argument to support his other positions.[s] In stating both income and expenditure, he took into the account on the one hand the year 1786 of diminished productiveness from a temporary cause, the reduction of duties, in consequence of a commercial treaty, that so soon compensated this diminution of receipt: on the other the year of 1788, a period of expenditure beyond the usual demands in time of peace; and thus endeavoured to make subjects specially circumstanced the foundation of a general average. Mr. Grenville, from plain facts and authentic documents, detected, and clearly exposed the sophistical reasoning of extraordinary genius,

Mr. Sheridan disputes his calculations.

[s] See Parliamentary Debates, June 11, 1789.

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exercised in forming an hypothesis inimical to political adversaries. [h]

Bill for subjecting tobacco to an excise.

To increase the revenue by the farther prevention of frauds, Mr. Pitt proposed a bill for transferring the duties on tobacco from the customs to the excise: tobacco, being a commodity of general consumption, might be rendered a productive source of revenue, but under the present regulations and duties was an article of smuggling, and indeed the principal subject of contraband trade, since the late act concerning tea, wines, and spirits. It appeared on inquiry and investigation, that one half of the tobacco consumed in the kingdom was smuggled, and that the revenue was defrauded by this means to the amount of nearly 300,000*l.* To remedy this evil the most effectual means would be to subject the greater part of the duty on tobacco to the survey of excise: the peculiar benefit of this change in the mode of collection, as a detail of the proceeds proved, had been very clearly exemplified in the article of wine: the manufacturers would no doubt make objections to the present proposition, as dealers in wine had done respecting the change in the duties upon their merchandize: but though they were to be heard with candour, assertions affecting their own interests were to be scrutinized with strictness, and to be no farther admitted than they were supported with collateral proof. While the bill affecting their commodity was pending, dealers in wine had asserted confidently, that, under the restrictions, they could not carry on their trade: the house at that time thought their reasoning insufficient, and tried the experiment; the result had been, that the trade had increased to an astonishing degree. The plan was controverted on general and special ground; by exposing British subjects to summary inspection and summary trials,

[h] See Parliamentary Debates, June 11, 1789.

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the extension of the excise laws was inconsistent with the principles of the constitution: there was a peculiar hardship in subjecting this manufacture to the excise, and the total loss of the trade itself would probably be the consequence: the variations in the weight of tobacco, during the process of its manufacture, were so inconceivably great, and at the same time so uncertain, that it would be impossible for the officers of the excise to take any account of stock, which might not subject the retailer, on the one hand, to a ruinous excess of duty, or on the other, to fines and forfeitures equally pernicious: there were, moreover, valuable secrets possessed by manufacturers of tobacco and snuff[1]; these would be inevitably exposed to the discovery of excisemen, among whom there might be persons capable of profiting by such an opportunity. A loud clamour was echoed through the country against the extension of the excise, as an unconstitutional and oppressive measure, and an infraction of British liberty; but such trite declamation did not influence legislature. The bill, in its passage through the houses, underwent various modifications; after which it received the royal assent.

Popular clamour against it.

It is passed into a law.

On the 1st of July, Mr. Dundas presented to the house a statement of Indian finance: from this account it appeared, that the annual revenues, after defraying the expense of the different settlements, amounted to 1,848,000*l.*; that the interest of the debt was 480,700*l.* and the principal 7,604,000*l.*; the excess of the revenue beyond the interest was 1,367,300*l.* to be applied to the liquidation of their debt. A petition was soon after presented from the company, praying that they might be permitted to add one million to their capital stock. This application was supported by Mr. Dundas, who affirmed that, upon a supposition of the final extinction of

Progressive prosperity of India stated by Mr. Dundas.

[1] Some of these, it was affirmed, had been purchased at upwards of 10,000*l.*

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their charter in 1794, their effects in Europe would overbalance their debts by the sum of 350,000*l.*; and that with respect to their debts in India, they would go along with the territory, and be very readily undertaken by those into whosoever hands the possession of that territory might come. A bill to enable the company to carry the prayer of their petition into effect was brought in, and passed through both houses with little opposition.

Slow progress of Mr. Hastings's trial,

THE trial of Mr. Hastings proceeded very slowly; it was the 20th of April before the court was resumed, and a charge was then opened by Mr. Burke, relative to the corrupt receipt of money. In the course of this accusation, having occasion to mention Nundcomar, Mr. Burke said, that Mr. Hastings had murdered Nundcomar by the hands of sir Elijah Impey. As the proceedings concerning this rajah made no part of the charges which the managers were appointed to conduct against Mr. Hastings, the defendant petitioned the house either to bring forward and prosecute the allegation in a specific article, or to restrain their manager from assertions totally irrelevant to the business entrusted to the prosecutors. A proposition of censure was moved against Mr. Burke, as having exceeded the authority vested in him by the commons, and employed words which ought not to have been used. The motion occasioned a warm debate, in which the supporters of Mr. Burke contended, that the complaint was made for the purpose of disgusting the managers with the office which they had undertaken; that if admitted it would so narrow their ground of procedure as to defeat the purposes of justice. Those who thought his expressions blameable, insisted that in no criminal process could the imputation of a crime not prosecuted, and consequently by the law presumed not to exist, tend to the attainment of justice. The matter of the charges was definite; to them

only was the accuser to speak, and to them only could the defendant answer: an assertion of extraneous guilt without an opportunity of denial, tended to produce an unfavourable impression that might affect the opinion of some judges on the real matter of the charges. The proposed motion, introduced by the marquis of Graham, was carried by a majority of one hundred and thirty-five. The proceedings respecting Mr. Hastings underwent very virulent invectives in periodical journals; one of these had the hardihood to assert, that "the trial of Mr. Hastings was to be put off to another session, unless the house of lords had spirit enough to put an end *to so shameful a business!*" This paragraph being complained of in the house, it was unanimously agreed the attorney-general should be directed to prosecute the printer.[k] A bill was this year introduced into parliament to establish a perpetual anniversary thanksgiving to Almighty God, for having by the glorious revolution delivered this nation from arbitrary power, and to commemorate annually the confirmation of the people's rights. After passing the house of commons it was rejected by the lords, on the ground of being unnecessary, as the service of the 5th of November had been altered for the express purpose of commemorating that glorious event.

On the 11th of August ended the longest session which the history has hitherto recorded, after having continued almost nine months without interruption. The chancellor, by his majesty's command, prorogued the houses, and delivered a short speech containing his majesty's thanks for the attention manifested to public

[k] In the course of the conversation to which this motion gave rise, Mr. Burke read from one of the public prints a curious paper, purporting to be a bill of charges made by the editor upon major Scott, for sundry articles inserted in the paper on his account. They chiefly consisted of speeches, letters, and paragraphs, composed by him; and amongst the rest was this singular article: *For attacking the veracity of Mr. Burke*, 3s. 6d.

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business, and the supplies which were granted: though the good offices of his majesty and his allies had not hitherto been effectual for restoring the general tranquillity, yet the farther extension of hostilities had been prevented, and the situation of affairs abroad promised to this country the uninterrupted enjoyment of peace.

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Continental affairs. — The year 1789 eventful to the civilized world. — Change in the relative policy of France and Austria. — Profound policy of Kaunitz in the treaty of Austria with France. — Imperial confederacy — produces the defensive alliance of Britain, Holland, and Prussia. — State of the belligerent powers. — Character of the sultan. — His death. — Succeeded by Selim. — Change of counsels, and effects on military operations. — Successes of the Russians and Austrians. — They respectively capture Bender and Belgrade. — Ottoman empire in danger. — Sweden. — Distresses of Gustavus. — Efforts of his genius and courage for extrication. — Miners of Dalecarlia. — The Danes invade Sweden. — British policy induces the Danes to retreat. — Gustavus suppresses mutiny and faction. — He confirms his popularity. — He directs his whole energies against Russia. — Military and naval campaign between Sweden and Russia. — Commotions in the Netherlands. — State and constitution of these provinces. — Joseph's violent desire of change under the name of reform. — Innovations in the ecclesiastical establishment. — Suppression of religious orders, — and confiscation of their property. — Suppression of ancient, venerated, and beneficial customs. — Change of judicial forms and proceedings. — Arbitrary system introduced. — Subversion of the established legislature. — Progress of despotism trampling liberty and franchises. — Joseph considers his Flemish subjects merely as sources of revenue. — Remonstrances of the Netherlanders. — Meeting of the States. — Deputies are sent to Vienna. — Joseph pretends to grant their requests. — Sends general Dalton to the Netherlands. — Despotic conduct of that officer. — Effects of his tyranny. — Farther cruelty and robbery by Joseph. — The Flemings resolve on forcible resistance. — Declaration of rights. — The patriots

defeat the Austrian troops. — They form themselves into a federal republic.

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1789.

1789 eventful to the civilized world.

THE summer of 1789 teemed with events of greater importance to the civilized world, than any which are recorded in modern history. Causes that had long secretly operated and gradually increased in force, now manifested themselves in the most stupendous effects. Before, however, the history proceeds to the principal transaction which will render the year 1789 for ever memorable, it is proper to carry the narrative to other subjects that may illustrate the collateral and relative state of other countries at the time in which a system commenced, that changed not only the policy but the opinion, sentiments, and character of continental Europe.

Charges in the relative policy of France and Austria.

DURING the last thirty years a very important alteration had taken place in the political relations of the continent. Through a great part of the sixteenth century, and the whole of the seventeenth, the wars which agitated the Christian world arose chiefly from the contending ambition of France and of Austria. At the accession of the house of Bourbon, both the royal and imperial princes of Austria had begun to decline from that power which the family had possessed under one head. The infatuated bigotry of Philip undid much of what the skilful policy of Charles had done; nevertheless, the dynasty, in the dominions of both the sovereigns retained a power very formidable to their neighbours. To impair the strength of the house of Austria was the principal object of Henry IV. in his foreign politics. His successors, as we have seen[a] throughout the seventeenth century, pursued this policy, and with such efficacy as to render the

[a] See the Introduction to this history.

French

French monarchy far superior to the combined dominions of the two Austrian branches. In the successive wars of Louis the XIII: and XIV. against Spain and Austrian Germany, France made large acquisitions; and that war, which was more fatal to her than any which she had encountered in modern times, secured to her princes the kingdom and dominions of Spain. This was the most disastrous blow which France ever gave to the house of Austria, and appeared to threaten her rapid humiliation. But the maritime ambition of France having driven her to pernicious contests with England, arrested the progress of her continental advantages[b]: she required a long interval of peace after the death of Louis XIV. to recruit her strength; and at the demise of the emperor Charles VI. she was recovered from her losses, and sufficiently potent to annoy her neighbours. A new co-operator now arose against the house of Austria; the king of Prussia on the one side aggrandized himself at the expense of Maria Theresa, while France pressed her on the other; and at the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle the empress-queen found her hereditary dominions curtailed, and her strength impaired. For a century and a half Austria had been progressively losing; her maritime ally had been uniformly victorious: but the naval triumphs of Britain had not averted disaster from Austria. Such was the general series of policy and events when Kaunitz came to be the minister of the empress-queen. The penetrating and comprehensive genius of that celebrated statesman saw, that in the whole result of contention Austria was really not a match for France; and that if she persisted in enmity to that kingdom, she not only would be totally unable to recover her losses, but must

Profound Policy of Kaunitz in the treaty of Austria with France.

[b] The impolicy of the French contests with England is placed in a very striking light by Soulavie, a writer afterwards at the Court of Bonaparte. See his Memoirs of Louis XVI. *passim*.

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incur greater. He conceived a design which, he trusted, would restore the splendor of Austria, and might permit France to embark in projects that he knew to be agreeable to her inclinations, but was convinced would reduce her resources, and leave to her less strength for continental advancement. [c] Hence arose the treaty of 1756 with France, which suffered Austria, instead of acting on the defensive, to resume her offensive ambition; and though her projects were defeated for the time by the genius and heroism of Frederic, yet her means of influence and aggrandizement were essentially increased by her amity with France. The want of a continental rival encouraged France to direct her principal efforts to a favourite object, that she never could nor can obtain: she hoped to overpower the naval strength of the mistress of the ocean: failed in the extravagant and impracticable attempts, and wasted at sea that strength which might have made her irresistible by land; and thus the diminution of the resources and power of France was, as Kaunitz foresaw [d], the consequence of her connection with her ancient rival, while Austria by the exhaustion of her neighbour was able to avail herself of the plundering projects of Russia and Prussia; and the dismemberment of Poland was evidently one fruit of Kaunitz's scheme. By the American war France was so much enfeebled, as in a great degree to have lost her former efficiency on the continent of Europe. The ancient opponent of Austrian ambition having thus discontinued her efforts, Joseph now hoped by his co-operation with the other principal potentate of the continent, that he would share the spoils of the Turkish empire, strip Prussia of her late acquisitions, extend the Austrian influence in Germany, and raise his family to an extent of dominion and splendor unparalleled

Imperial confederacy

[c] See Soulavie's Memoirs of Louis XVI. vol. iii. chap. 8.
[d] See Soulavie, *passim*.

since

since Charles V. In this expectation he had commenced the war, and notwithstanding the untoward events of the preceding campaign, he still trusted that he would ultimately succeed in his projects of lawless spoliation. The principle of British interference in continental politics was uniform; to prevent any other potentate from acquiring such an accession of power as might endanger the independence of Europe, and the security of these realms. The application of this principle led the English cabinet to inspirit measures of defence against the imperial aggressors; and in such circumstances to combine with Prussia, which was the most interested, disposed, and able to repel the ambitious confederacy. Frederic William very readily assented; thence arose the defensive alliance, whose political counsels and efforts directed and invigorated the military preparations of the nations that were at war with Austria and Russia; but the ignorance and barbarity of one of the belligerent maintainers of national independence, prevented her from steadily following the advice of British wisdom.

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produces the defensive alliance of Britain, Holland, and Prussia.

We left the emperor returned to Vienna with disappointment and disgust, because a war contrary to justice and policy had produced disaster and disgrace; Russia profiting by his efforts, in employing so great a part of the strength of her enemy, and enabled to make a powerful impression on the Turkish dominions. Notwithstanding the loss of Oczakow, the campaign of 1788 had been on the whole favourable to the Ottomans: the advantages on the Danube compensated the loss upon the Neister. The ability of the vizier had invigorated and formed his troops, restored the military character of the Ottomans, and displayed itself in policy as well as in war; but the talents and virtues of this minister were misrepresented by envy, and misapprehended by ignorance: conduct, not only wise but necessary, was imputed to weakness and pusillanimity.

State of the belligerent powers.

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1789. Character of the sultan.

lanimity. One man, however, at court was able to appreciate his merits; this was the sultan himself, Abdulhamet, a prince of a very different character from those who usually filled the Turkish throne: far from the gross ignorance that commonly marked the Ottoman despots, he was distinguished for intelligence and information: instead of ferocity, cruelty, and barbarity, leading features in his character were humanity and beneficence: he was conversant in the languages and sciences of several Christian countries: he spoke the Italian, Spanish, and French tongues with considerable fluency, and understood them all perfectly: he delighted greatly in perusing European books, and conversing with European men; and his favourite subjects of discourse and study were history and politics. Such abilities, acquirements, and dispositions, were not the most favourable to admiration, of either the gloomy superstition or savage despotism of his empire. As a prudent sovereign he scrupulously adhered to the established forms of his country's religion; but by persons who were well acquainted with his acuteness, he was conjectured not to be without a perception of its absurdities: he saw and deeply lamented the dreadful vices of the Turkish government and institutions, but knew them to be so interwoven with the sentiments, opinions[c], and characters of mussulmen, that any attempt to effect a reform would be unavailing, until the people themselves should undergo a complete revolution: what he could not correct in principle, he endeavoured to moderate in practice: to improve his subjects, and to prepare them gradually for beneficial change, he encouraged industry and the arts, agriculture, commerce, and manufactures. He abhorred the janizaries, as a body of men insolent and oppressive to his subjects, and dangerous to himself; and had

[c] Annual Register. 1789.

projected

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projected the formation of a regular army on the European model, which might have afforded the means of internal tranquillity and of defence from foreign attack, without enslaving the people and endangering the sovereign. In his grand vizier he found a very able counsellor and co-adjutor: when that officer returned from the army to the capital, a violent faction having sought his destruction, the sultan ordered him to be arrested, not with a view to inflict summary punishment, according to the usual mode of the Turkish emperors, but to make him stand a fair and impartial trial: the result was an honourable acquittal; soon after which he returned to the army to make dispositions for the approaching campaign. On the 17th of April 1789, the Turkish empire experienced a misfortune, productive in its consequences of the greatest calamities and humiliation; Abdulhamet being suddenly seized with a fit in the street, dropped down, and after languishing a few hours expired. He was succeeded by his nephew Selim, of whom great hopes had been entertained, as he was educated under the eye and direction of his excellent uncle: but the first act of his reign by no means confirmed the expectations in his favour; the most tyrannical rapacity manifested itself in his conduct: its first victim was Jussu Pacha, the illustrious grand vizier; this minister possessing wealth to the amount of about a million sterling, was seized at the head of the grand army, conveyed prisoner to Constantinople, sentenced to banishment and the forfeiture of his treasures: on his way to his place of exile he was murdered, his head was brought in triumph to the sultan, and by his orders hung up to grace the gates of the seraglio. Confiscation and execution were the daily acts of the young despot; every wise measure of his uncle was changed, and, except the grand admiral, every able officer and wise counsellor was displaced: the Turkish empire rising to

His death.

Succeeded by Selim.

ancient

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ancient glory under the wisdom and virtue of one ruler, was, by the vice and folly of another, soon precipitated to a lower abyss of disgrace and disaster than it had ever experienced. The bashaw of Widin was appointed grand vizier, and soon showed how totally unqualified he was to supply the place of his predecessor. As the preceding campaign had been successful against the emperor, and unsuccessful against the Russians, the late vizier had proposed for the present campaign an offensive war against the Austrians, to improve the advantages already obtained, and a defensive warfare against the Russians, to prevent their farther progress: the young sultan and his minister, to show that they would be governed entirely by their own counsels, reversed the plans of their predecessors, and by a most preposterous policy determined to attack the conquerors, and defend themselves against the vanquished[f]; and on this scheme they concerted their operations. The grand vizier promised to retrieve Oczakow, and marched northward for that purpose: the Russians, under general Kamenskoi, being placed on the borders of Bessarabia, not only protected Oczakow, but endangered Bender: the grand Russian army, under the princes Potemkin and Repnin, was stationed between the Bog and the Neister, to cover their late conquest and make farther advances. A plan of much better concert was this year contrived and executed between the Austrians and Russians, than in the former: the emperor prepared, as before, four armies; his own health did not admit of his taking the command in person, but he prevailed on old marshal Haddick to head his grand army, which was destined to act in the neighbourhood of Belgrade. The troops next in force, the scene of whose exertions was to be the north-west frontiers of Turkey near Croatia and the

Change of counsels, and effects on military operations.

Successes of the Russians and Austrians.

[f] See Annual Register, 1789, chap. vii.

river

river Save, he placed under marshal Loudon: the prince of Saxe Coburg took the lead on the side of Moldavia, and co-operated with the Russian general Suwarrow; between him and the grand Austrian army the prince Hohenloe commanded on the frontiers of Wallachia to carry on a war of posts and skirmishes, and to act in concert with either the forces to his right or left, as occasion might require: thus, from Oczakow to Dalmatia, from the northern extremity of the Euxine to the Adriatic, a line of armies extended along the whole frontier of Turkey, amounting to three hundred thousand brave men, well disciplined, commanded by skilful generals, and so stationed as to act with the most perfect concert. Against such a confederacy of force and skill had the Turks to contend; by wickedness and infatuation, deprived of the leaders and counsellors who could have best directed their efforts. The prince of Saxe Coburg first retrieved the honour of the Austrian arms in this war: a Turkish seraskier, at the head of an army of thirty thousand men, being encamped near Focksan, a fortified town in Wallachia, the prince of Coburg, with a much inferior force, attacked him in his camp, and gained a complete victory; the seraskier himself, with a number of his principal officers were taken prisoners; above five thousand of his men were killed or captured; the whole army was dispersed and ruined, while the artillery and spoils of the camp, with the town of Focksan, fell into the hands of the conquerors. In Bessarabia the Turks engaged in a number of small and desultory battles, in which they were generally defeated. The vizier seeing no hopes of making good his boast respecting Oczakow, in the month of August, with the grand Turkish army, took a western direction, and came to the heart of Wallachia. The prince of Saxe Coburg and marshal Suwarrow, having marched southwards with an army consisting

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ing of near thirty thousand men, attacked the Turkish host, that amounted to ninety thousand, near Martineste, and with little difficulty or loss gained one of the most signal victories recorded in modern history: ten thousand were killed on the spot, the rout and dispersion was complete; cessation of pursuit from the conquerors only saved the slaughter from being general; and the whole camp, including the grand vizier's tent and equipage, an immense quantity of stores, furniture, provisions, and ammunition, were among the spoils of the conquerors. The fugitives hastened across the Danube, execrating their general, to whose folly and misconduct they imputed their disaster; they reminded him of his boasts, and compared these with his actual performance.[g] The victors pursuing their advantage, captured Bucharest, the capital of Wallachia, with the fortress of Cyermitz, and reduced the greater part of the province. Near Bender the Turks displayed great valour in several encounters under Hassan Bey; but engaging in a pitched battle, after a very obstinate contest, they were entirely defeated: in consequence of this victory prince Potemkin laid siege to Bender, which, after having vigorously defended itself, surrendered in the month of November. On the western frontiers of the Turkish empire, the most important enterprizes were undertaken on the side of Croatia: marshal Laudohn began the campaign with besieging Gradisca, which in the former year had so vigorously withstood the Austrian attacks: on the 20th of June, instead of regularly constructing lines of circumvallation, he commenced a violent cannonade and bombardment: the Turks were so much intimidated, that

[g] So blindly and stupidly arrogant was this weak, headstrong, and ignorant man, that, when he took the command of the army, he caused an immense quantity of iron chains to be made, in order to manacle the legions of Austrian and Russian prisoners, whom he expected to drive before him to Constantinople, as monuments of triumph. At the close of the campaign he was beheaded. See Annual Register, 1789.

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on the second day they evacuated the place: they had, indeed, no confidence in the present commander in chief, the grand vizier; and predestination, mingling with their dejection, on account of so many disasters, they conceived that every attempt against the Russians and Austrians would be totally useless, and that fate had decreed they were to be vanquished: this superstition had a very powerful influence on their conduct, and greatly contributed to the victories of their enemies. After his success at Gradisca, Loudon made preparations for the siege of Belgrade: the Turks were so dismayed, that an operose attack was not necessary: the systematic and steady adherence of the Germans to precedent, however, made them employ the same time and labour in dispositions for this enterprize, that would have been wanted in quite different circumstances, and quite different sentiments of the enemy. Formerly, in besieging Belgrade great numbers of boats had been employed by the Austrians, in order to oppose multitudes of the boats employed by the Turks in its defence: at present the Ottomans had on the Danube no nautical force of the kind: the Germans, however, proceeded upon their general principle, both in war and politics, authority and precedent; and like other votaries of the same rules of reasoning, did not very nicely investigate the case: prince Eugene, they said, employed boats in besieging Belgrade; therefore we must use them also: in making preparations upon this principle, so much time elapsed, that it was the 12th of September before the Austrians invested the place: the trenches were speedily opened, and the batteries constructed; and after a defence of about eighteen days the town was taken by assault. Thus the principal fortresses on the Turkish frontiers fell under the arms of Austria and of Russia; the Turkish troops were defeated, and believing themselves victims of all-powerful destiny, were filled with consternation

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They respectively capture Bender and Belgrade.

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1789 Ottoman empire in danger.

sternation and dismay; they could no longer bear the sight of their enemy, and any small Austrian or Russian detachment was sufficient to disperse any number of those who attempted to form a body: winter only seemed to retard the subversion of the Ottoman empire.

Sweden.

WHILE the Russians were making rapid stretches to the attainment of their grand objects in the south, their active, enterprising, and intrepid foe in the north afforded them considerable annoyance. Gustavus, when about to commence hostilities with Russia, had employed great pains to convince the court of Denmark, that it was the common interest of both kingdoms to oppose the encroaching politics of Catharine. There were, however, several obstacles to a confederation between Denmark and Sweden. The very year in which Gustavus had accomplished a revolution in his own country, great discontents having arisen in Norway, the king of Sweden had studiously fomented them, and almost succeeded in exciting an insurrection. Though the discovery of the design by the court of Copenhagen, before it was ripe for execution, prevented it from being accomplished, yet Denmark had ever since regarded Sweden with a very watchful and jealous eye: Catharine, on the other hand, had cultivated the friendship of the Danish court with the closest assiduity: she had sacrificed to Denmark patrimonial rights and inheritances of person in the duchies of Sleswick and Holstein, and thereby enabled the Danes to round their dominions on the side of Germany. In addition to the general policy by which Catharine established powerful partisans in the neighbouring courts, this conduct enhanced the connection that had long subsisted between Denmark and Russia. The king of Sweden, by subsequent attentions, endeavoured to obliterate in Denmark his measures respecting Norway. On the commencement of the Turkish war he paid a very unexpected

unexpected visit at Copenhagen; and endeavoured fully to conciliate the court and nation, and to impress them with an opinion of the danger that must accrue to smaller powers from the ambition of Russia. The court of Denmark could not perceive any of those dangers, which so deeply affected the Swedish king; and accordingly treated, and seemed to consider them as entirely visionary, and mere creatures of his imagination. They lamented that he should entertain intentions of involving himself in so unequal and ruinous a contest, and endeavoured strongly to dissuade him from such an undertaking.[b] Although the king was unmoved by their arguments, yet he did not entertain the most distant idea of any connection subsisting between Denmark and Russia. Catharine, however, had been so successful in her intrigues at the court of Denmark, that she prevailed on the prince regent to conclude a treaty, by which he bound himself to assist Russia with a certain number of forces, should she be involved in a war with Sweden. Gustavus having no apprehension of hostilities from Denmark, when preparing to open the campaign in Finland, had drawn away his forces to that quarter, and left the vicinity of Norway defenceless; when he was involved in all the trouble and danger occasioned by the refractoriness, or rather the revolt of his army in Finland, the court of Copenhagen issued a public notice to the foreign ministers, and among the rest to the Swedish, who was most immediately concerned, of the conditions by which she was bound to Russia, to supply her with a considerable auxiliary force by sea and land, and of her own determination to fulfil those conditions. This denunciation was soon followed by an invasion of Sweden on the side of Norway in September 1788. In this distressing situation, Gustavus, surrounded

Distresses of Gustavus.

[b] See Annual Register, 1789.

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rounded by enemies, and deserted by his own troops, appeared overwhelmed with ruin. The contagion from the army had spread through various parts of the kingdom, and infected even the capital; while the nobility seemed fast approaching to the recovery of their former power and consequence in the nation. The senate was eagerly disposed to resume its ancient authority: all the circumstances of the time, the deplorable state of the king's affairs, together with the prevalent disposition of the nobility, rendered them confident of success; they accordingly took measures, without consulting the king, to assemble in diet, the states of the kingdom, under colour of considering the deranged and dangerous state of public affairs, the discontents and disorders which prevailed in the nation. Before this design was executed, the king arrived at Stockholm; knowing, that though the nobility were inimical to his interests, the burghers and people were warmly attached to him, he summoned an assembly of citizens; he therein declared, that reposing the most unbounded confidence in their affection, loyalty, and valour, and being himself called to oppose an unexpected enemy, he should entrust the defence and preservation of the capital, the protection of the queen and family to their faithful zeal. Such an important trust, and sacred deposit, inspired the generous plebeians with an enthusiastic desire of showing themselves worthy of the royal confidence; they immediately embodied themselves, and cheerfully performed all the duties of soldiers. Gustavus, meanwhile, sent an answer to the intimation of Denmark: he expressed his astonishment that, when peace and friendship had subsisted for sixty years between the two powers without interruption, and he himself had employed his utmost endeavours to preserve a harmony so beneficial to both parties, his Danish majesty should have commenced hostilities: he knew nothing of the engagements subsisting between Denmark and Russia, but he now desired

Effects of his genius and courage for extrication.

desired from the court of Copenhagen a direct explanation of its intentions, whether Denmark meant only to act as an auxiliary, by furnishing a stipulated force, or intended direct aggression against Sweden? If the latter was their resolution, he must consider the war as commenced, and act accordingly. Were so unjustifiable a measure adopted, other powers, he insinuated, would, for their own security, interfere to prevent the advances of such ambitious rapacity. The prince regent of Denmark in reply declared, that he had no intention of interfering in the war, any farther than he was bound to Russia by a treaty concluded in 1781, long before hostilities were in contemplation, and that he would not exceed the force therein stipulated: he expressed his earnest desire for the restoration of peace. Meanwhile, the new treaty between Great Britain and Prussia began to unfold its objects, to the great encouragement of all those states that wished to preserve the balance of Europe from being overturned by the imperial confederacy. France, the old ally of Sweden, being unable to afford any assistance, he, now looked for support and protection to the wise and vigorous policy of the defensive alliance, and with confident expectations of ultimate success.

Miners of Dalecarlia.

On the confines of Norway, is the province of Dalecarlia, memorable in Swedish history for having afforded shelter and concealment to the celebrated Gustavus Vasa, when flying from the Danish usurpers, and for having begun the revolution which placed that hero on the throne of his ancestors. The inhabitants, sunk in their mines among the rocks and mountains, and secluded from the rest of the world, are ignorant and rough; but hardened by climate, situation, and pursuit, are strong and valiant, and have the honesty and hospitality of generous barbarians: from their ancestors they inherit the warmest loyalty and attach-

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ment to their sovereigns; their native courage operating upon this principle, induces them with the promptest heroism to abandon mines and forests whenever their king requires their assistance. To these gallant rustics Gustavus had recourse; he followed the example of his illustrious namesake, and descended to desert mines and caverns to visit the loyal heroes. The second appearance of a king in these recesses, also a Gustavus, and come to solicit their assistance, recalled traditionary glory to the miners of Dalecarlia: they anticipated the application of their sovereign; eagerly proffered their services to defend their prince, and inflict vengeance on the Danes, towards whom they cherished an hereditary hatred ever since the time that they tyrannized over Sweden. The king, having testified his gratitude for their loyal and affectionate offers, limited his request to three thousand men. This body was immediately equipt to attend their monarch, and though by no means all provided with regular arms[1], yet, furnished with such weapons as they could procure, and inspired with loyalty, with vigorous bodies and intrepid courage, they were a formidable band.

The Danes invade Sweden.

THE Danes, meanwhile, entered Sweden from the east part of Norway, under prince Charles of Hesse, and marching along the sea-coast, captured Stramstead, and penetrated as far as Gottenburgh, the principal port of Sweden for foreign commerce; and the governor was about to surrender by an inglorious capitulation: Gustavus was aware of the danger of this valuable city, and sensible that, before he could bring his troops to its relief, the capture might be effected, in order to inspire the

[1] The author of the annual Register for 1788, in this part of his narrative observes: "They formed a grotesque appearance; some, whose families had preserved the fusty, uncouth weapons of antiquity, gloried in the possession, and fancied themselves thoroughly equipped for war; but the greater number had no other resource than those rustic instruments of labour used in the mines or in husbandry, which seemed the best calculated for their purpose."

inhabitants

inhabitants by his presence, he hastened to the place alone, and travelling night and day, arrived a few hours after the determination to surrender. The king immediately displaced the governor, and having assembled a meeting of the citizens, by the powers of his persuasive eloquence so inspirited them with courage and confidence, that they resolved to defend the city to the last extremity. The force, however, of the Danish army, and the absence of the Swedish troops, rendered the success of the defenders very improbable. In this critical situation, the wise, protecting policy of Britain, that has uniformly supported the weak against the strong, interfered for the preservation of Gustavus. There being no ambassador from either Britain or Prussia at the Court of Stockholm, Mr. Elliot, envoy at Copenhagen, was sent to the Swedish king, delegate of the allied powers, and to mediate between the belligerent parties. Mr. Elliot sent a letter in his new character from Gottenburgh to prince Charles, informing him that the allied powers had sent a courier to the empress to demand a general armistice; meanwhile, he desired a particular truce, until the effect of the application to Petersburgh should be known. Prince Charles answered, that he should not suspend hostilities without the express orders of his court; Mr. Elliot, in reply, informed him, that if the army which he commanded, proceeded farther in offensive operations against Sweden, Prussia would attack Denmark by land, and England would attack her by sea; but that he hoped the prince royal, regent of Denmark, would adopt such measures as would prevent the farther effusion of blood. This notification was not without effect: the Danish general, instead of pressing the siege, sent to his court for instructions. The firm and determined remonstrances of the British ambassador, supported by the strongest and most convincing

British policy induces the Danes to retreat.

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vincing arguments, manifesting the wise and comprehensive principles of the allied powers, and the real interests of Denmark, so deeply impressed the prince regent, that he agreed to conclude a short armistice; after that a longer; and lastly for six months. The Danish army departed from Sweden; but the proffered mediation of the defensive alliance was refused by Russia. Freed by the intervention of the protecting confederacy from the invasion of the Danes, Gustavus had in winter leisure to attend to the internal affairs of his kingdom, and to make preparations for the campaign. He had still very great difficulties to encounter: his army had not only refused to fight in his cause, but actually concluded an armistice with Russia without his consent. The party of his subjects connected with his mighty enemy was extremely powerful and desirous of exerting their strength, in effecting a revolution which would totally overturn the royal authority. In this state of affairs peace must have been of all things the most desirable to the king, and the most suitable to his circumstances; but his potent enemy was too haughty, and too implacable in her resentments, to listen now to accommodation on any terms of equality: she knew his situation, and the advantages which she might derive from his embarrassments; so that personal animosity and political interest dictated the same conduct. The king saw that, desirable as peace would be on fair equitable terms, it could then be attained only by submitting to conditions disgraceful and ruinous: of two great evils war was the smaller; he had no alternative, but either to surrender his crown to disaffected nobles, and the ambitious Catharine, or by magnanimous efforts to conquer both foreign and domestic enemies. In order to cope with Russia, Gustavus had two great objects to be previously accomplished, the subjection of the mutinous army, and the coercion of the

Gustavus suppresses mutiny and faction.

the rebellious aristocracy. There is an elasticity in vigorous minds which apportions effort to difficulty, and in pressing emergencies produces exertions beyond the previous conception of powers. In such exigencies Gustavus felt that his invention was fertile, his courage undaunted, and his magnanimity elevated: he knew that by a great majority of his subjects he was beloved and revered: in his own genius and fortitude, and in the affection of his people, he sought and found resources. Trusting to his popularity among the plebeian classes, on his return to Stockholm from Gottenburgh, he called a meeting of the magistrates and most respectable citizens of the capital; to these he gave the flattering name of a grand council of state, by whose advice he professed to be governed in all his measures: he thanked them for the care with which they had executed the important trust committed to them in his capital and family: he informed them that in the preceding campaign, instead of retrieving Swedish glory, the national honour had been blasted by the disaffection of his nobles: these had corrupted his army, had led it to the disgraceful and fatal excess of a mutiny, in the presence of their sovereign, and in the face of a foreign enemy. Expatiating upon these subjects, he impressed his audience with the fullest conviction, and they unanimously declared for the continuance of the war; with a warm assurance of their lives and fortunes being devoted to his service. Having secured the support of his capital, he waited with confidence for the meeting of the states; determined as to the measures which he would pursue, if they continued refractory. On the 26th of January, the diet having met, the order of the nobles immediately displayed their animosity to the king, and their disregard for his authority: they grossly insulted count Lowenhaupt, the president appointed by his majesty, and even

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even treated the name of Gustavus himself with great virulence and contempt. The king having found that the three other orders, the peasants, clergy, and burghers, were unanimous in supporting the war, disregarded the opposition of the nobles, and determined to repress their insolence. On the 17th of February he repaired in person to the diet to demand satisfaction for the insult that was offered to the president, his representative in the assembly: a violent altercation here arose between the king and nobles, in the course of which his majesty made a charge of disaffection and treason; the nobles arose and left the assembly: the king, addressing the three remaining states, most solemnly disclaimed every intention of aspiring at absolute authority, but declared there was a faction in the kingdom inimical to Sweden, and devoted to her enemy; that for the good of the country the faction must be crushed. The states unanimously expressed their concurrence with his majesty, and their determination to support any measures which he should think expedient for so desirable a purpose. On the 20th of February, the king having communicated his plan of procedure to the three estates, ordered twenty-five of the principal nobility to be arrested, and the officers who had been most active in exciting mutiny, to be seized and brought to Stockholm for trial. These vigorous measures received the general approbation of the three remaining orders. Gustavus proceeded in his efforts, and formed the bold measure of abolishing the senate, a council consisting chiefly of nobles, and that had of late greatly thwarted the king: his vigorous resolution entirely suppressed this assembly, without the least commotion or opposition, and in its place he instituted a new council, totally dependent on himself: the nobles were so much dismayed and intimidated by these acts, that they suffered

Gustavus to extend his changes: his majesty, to secure and confirm the remaining orders in their attachment, granted them respectively such new privileges, and paid them such honours, as he knew they would most highly value. To render these alterations permanent, Gustavus proposed an act of confederation, union, and surety, by which he and all true Swedes were to be mutually bound in the most firm and solemn manner, not only to common defence, but to the preservation of the present constitution and laws, against all impugners, whether foreign or domestic. Though the nobles so far recovered from the consternation as to oppose this measure, yet his majesty directed the president to subscribe it in their name; and thus Gustavus effected in a few weeks a revolution, which entirely destroyed the authority that the nobles had been so long endeavouring to re-establish, and the influence which the intrigues of Russia had been so many years employed in acquiring. The trials of the officers charged with mutiny commenced soon after the arrest; and though the necessity of obedience and military subordination required condign punishment, the executions were not numerous.

He confirms his popularity.

By the reduction of the nobles, the suppression of the mutiny, and his popularity with the other states, Gustavus was now master of the whole efficient force of his kingdom, and thereby was enabled to make a vigorous preparation for prosecuting the war with Russia: besides the supplies afforded him by the estates, he received a very considerable sum from the Ottoman porte. Before he opened the campaign against Russia, the strong arguments, and urgent instances of Mr. Elliot, on the part of the defensive alliance, prevailed upon Denmark to consent to an absolute neutrality, and thus freed the Swedish king from that source of apprehension. Gustavus was now enabled to direct his whole attention

He directs his whole energies against Russia.

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attention and force to the prosecution of the war in Finland, and opened the campaign in the beginning of June. On the 28th a very fierce battle was fought between the Swedes and Russians, in which the latter had almost prevailed, when the king, springing from his horse, put himself at the head of his infantry, rallied them, and compelled the enemy to fly. Various skirmishes were afterwards fought, in which the Swedish monarch displayed the most intrepid and active valour, bold and fertile genius[k]; the successes were various; but during the first part of the campaign most frequently on the side of Sweden. Encouraged by his advantages, the hero penetrated into Russian Finland, having on the coast a fleet of light galleys to co-operate with the army as occasion might require. Between this fleet and another of the same sort from Russia a battle was fought, in which great numbers were destroyed on both sides: the Swedes were obliged to retire; and though they were not totally defeated, the superiority of the Russians was such, that it compelled Gustavus to evacuate the enemy's country.[l] The season being now too far advanced to admit military operations in those cold latitudes, both armies withdrew into winter quarters, and the king returned to Stockholm. The duke of Suddermania, the king's brother, commanded the principal fleet of Sweden, but no decisive action took place between his armament and the fleet of Russia.

Military and naval campaign between Sweden and Russia.

Commotions in the Netherlands.

WHILE the emperor was by his preparations and expense, together with the misconduct of the enemy, obtaining victories and conquests from which he could derive no permanent advantage, he was endangering his most productive possessions. The

[k] Gustavus depended entirely on genius and heroism; being deficient in military experience and skill, as he himself afterwards acknowledged in conversation with the marquis de Bouillé. See Memoirs, p. 396.

[l] Annual Register, 1789, chap. viii.

Netherlands,

Netherlands, first of all the states of modern Europe, successfully cultivated agriculture, commerce, and manufactures, and acquired at an early period a considerable degree of liberty. They consisted of independent states, resembling one another in their pursuits, manners, character, and constitution of government. Their polity was composed of three orders, the nobles, clergy, and people, under the limited principality of one person denominated count: the contests between the prerogatives and privileges of the respective principalities, according to their result, gave different modifications to the freedom which they all possessed, and which they continued to retain under various families of princes that happened, through intermarriage, to succeed to the sovereign authority. The best defined, and most perfect of their political systems, was the constitution of Brabant. The great charter of that country, was no less venerated by the inhabitants, than the charter of Runnymede is revered by Englishmen: from a circumstance attending its execution, it was known by the name of Joyous Entry. The inhabitants of the Austrian Netherlands were extremely devoted to their ancient religion: this predilection probably arose, partly from their long intercourse with Spain, and, perhaps, still more from the animosity between them and their neighbours and countrymen the Dutch, that originated in wars in which they were the principal sufferers: but, whatever might be the cause, it is a certain fact, the Netherlanders were extremely addicted to the most absurd and extravagant tenets of the Roman catholic faith: they manifested a very warm affection to their princes, both the aboriginal sovereigns of the country, and their descendants of the house of Austria. Upon the accession of the German branch of that house to the dominion of these provinces, Charles VI. was received by the people with the greatest cordiality

State and constitution of these provinces.

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diality and good-will, he having first sworn at his inauguration, as his successors have constantly done, to the preservation of their ancient constitutions and rights. During the distresses of the family, at the accession of Maria Teresa, they derived the most essential benefit from the zeal and fidelity, the loyalty, and the resources of money and of men, which were supplied by their subjects in the Low Countries. The free subsidies were granted with a liberality proportioned to the emergency for which they were required: they continued during her life to manifest undiminished affection, and cherished the same sentiments for her son Joseph. Beloved by them before, the emperor had confirmed their attachment by the flattering hopes which he raised in the Low Countries, that he would recover and open to them the navigation of the Scheldt. Blasted as their expectations were, imputing the disappointment to necessity, they had not relaxed in attachment to their sovereign; and though they did not rise in their estimation of his political and military abilities, they were grateful for the benignity of his intention. The spirit, however, of restless innovation, which so much distinguished the active, but superficial character of Joseph, soon extended to the Netherlands, and interfered with their ancient privileges and ancient religion, the two objects of which they were most peculiarly tenacious.

No position in political philosophy is more obvious, than that systems of polity, civil or ecclesiastical, must be adapted to the sentiments, habits, opinions, and even prejudices of the people [m]: such reforms, therefore, as overlook these, however abstractedly agreeable to reason and rectitude, are neither reasonable nor right in their application to those particular cases, because they do not conduce

[m] See Aristotle's Politics.

to

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to the happiness of the subject. The clergy were alarmed and enraged; the people grieved and astonished by the suppression of religious houses, to which however absurd in the enlightened views of an Englishman, the Netherlanders annexed an importance, that a wise ruler would have regarded. It was soon seen that reform was not his only object; and that he desired change for the sake of confiscation, that he might procure the means of gratifying an extravagant and infatuated ambition. Men of abilities and enlarged minds, being totally free from bigotry and superstition, thought that some of the monasteries and convents might be very easily spared; but by no means relished suppression for the sake of plunder: the same rapacity which seized that species of property, would, they apprehended, extend to other kinds of possessions. The ecclesiastical order formed a very powerful, numerous, and opulent body in the Low Countries; and their property of every sort was estimated at the immense sum of twenty-five millions sterling. The states being composed of the representatives of the clergy, the nobility, and the commons: the church had likewise possessed, from time immemorial, at least a third part in the government of the country. It was apprehended, from the emperor's conduct, that he had projected to destroy the privileges of this order, as a preliminary step to the seizure of their immense wealth. All ranks were alarmed, and began to coalesce, in order to oppose an innovating system, the real purpose of which they conceived not to be reform, but robbery. Those who were themselves merely anxious for the preservation of their civil rights, found it expedient to encourage the discontents of the clergy, and even to profess sympathy with the superstition and bigotry of the lower orders: these various causes coinciding, formed a compact and powerful opposition against the dangers which threatened their ancient establishments.

Joseph's violent desire of change under the name of reform.

Innovations in the ecclesiastical establishments.

Suppression of religious orders,

and confiscation of their property.

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ments. Fortunately for his subjects and neighbours, as the objects of Joseph were wicked, his policy was weak: he was totally deficient in that dexterity and address which can varnish mischievous schemes, and smooth the way for their reception: he neither tried disguise, insinuation, nor deceit, the usual engines of ability attempting injustice, where the effect of force would be doubtful: his heart dictated usurpation and injury, but his head was not well fitted for ensuring success: a harsh, arbitrary, and imperious display of authority appeared in all his measures: he was particularly desirous of suppressing ancient customs, and changing ancient institutions. There was a festival of great antiquity in the Low Countries, called the Keremesse, and highly venerated by the inhabitants: it was a season of mutual visiting, and of reconciling differences, not only between individuals, but villages; it was equally a season for contracting marriages, forming new friendships, and renewing and cementing the old. This innocent source of festive recreation, this laudable occasion of social virtue, was in the emperor's innovating zeal suppressed. The disposal of land and revenue, belonging to the abolished convents, produced great dissatisfaction and complaint: they were rendered part of the royal domains, and merely filled the coffers of the emperor. His next attempt was upon the abbacies, the most opulent and splendid of the religious establishments. Several of these conferred a right on the possessors, of being directly inherent members of the states. In Brabant this high distinction and privilege in favour of the abbots, was carried to a greater extent than elsewhere; for the whole of the clergy being the first order of the state, were represented by abbots only. Joseph did not at first subvert the abbacies, but as the incumbents died, placed them to be held *in commendam*, which was directly contrary to an express article of the Joyous

Suppression of ancient, venerated, and beneficial customs.

ous Entry. In the beginning of 1787 he published two edicts, which entirely absorbed the consideration of every smaller change: by these all the tribunals [n], all the forms and course of civil justice, which for so many centuries had been established and pursued in the Low Countries, which the people had so long considered as their glory, and regarded with enthusiastic admiration, were to be abolished in one day. The forms of process in the old courts were fair and open: they publicly exhibited the series of evidence, rules of interpretation, the principles applied, and grounds of decision. New tribunals were appointed, in which the secrecy of despotism marked the proceedings; witnesses were privately examined, the parties were often ignorant of the evidence on which they were tried, and the decision was left to a single judge, who was to determine according to his discretion without any existing law. The persons appointed to this office were foreigners [o], totally unacquainted with the ancient laws of the Netherlands, or at least altogether regardless of their spirit and tenor. Such modes of judicial procedure, combined with the other parts of the emperor's conduct, were considered as the forerunners of proscription and tyranny: they excited great alarm among the people, not without a determination to resist acts so contrary to the compact by which Joseph held the sovereignty of the Netherlands. But the second edict advancing in lawless usurpation, confirmed their resolution

Change of judical forms and proceedings.

Arbitrary system introduced.

[n] The principal tribunals were in the villages; a court held by the lord of the manor, who in smaller cases delegated his authority to a set of reputable men within his district; but in greater judged himself, being assisted by two eminent counsellors to expound the laws. In the cities the jurisdiction was in the hands of their respective magistrates: there was a supreme tribunal composed of sixteen judges and a president, in which, causes either civil or criminal might originate; and in civil cases an appeal lay from the inferior courts. See Annual Register, 1789, p. 207.

[o] The baron de Martini, an Italian, was sent into the Low Countries, with the title of Imperial Commissary, to establish and regulate the new tribunals, and to prescribe to a nation, which had for many ages gloried in the freedom, as well as the equity of its civil institutions, in what manner justice should be dispensed in future.

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not quietly to submit to the destruction of their rights.

THE states of the Netherlands were justly deemed by the people the guardians of their laws, liberty, and property; and in them was vested the power of imposing taxes on the subjects, and granting subsidies to the prince. In the exercise of this power they had uniformly satisfied both parties, by liberal grant without burdensome impost. The assembly of the states met annually at Brussels, and having performed the most material part of their business, entrusted the rest to a select committee, whose proceedings they reviewed at the following meeting. This legislative branch of the constitution was no less valued than the judicative, but the emperor in his second edict proclaimed its subversion; he abolished the old institutions and forms, and substituted an engine of state under the name of a council of general government, which, while it drew all public affairs within the sphere of its own action, was to be ruled by the court minister who was placed at its head. Without nominally annihilating the assembly of the states, the new form of government really destroyed its powers: it ordained, that the states might nominate a deputy, who, if appoved of by the minister and his council, might be a member of that council, and when required by the minister, was to sign all the acts formerly exercised by the states, but now to be proposed by the council. Thus, the states were really to have no other power but to subscribe imperial mandates; and their authority was to be exercised by a nominal representative, under the controul of the minister and his council: the jurisdiction of this new council was farther to extend to all cases of police and revenue: all persons even suspected, or pretended to be suspected, were the objects of inquisitorial procedure, by order of the council and minister, from whose decrees there

Subversion of the established legislature.

there lay no appeal. When the nature and extent of this despotic usurpation was understood and comprehended, the people very loudly expressed indignant resentment against so daring a violation of that convention, by which only the archduke of Austria held the limited sovereignity of the Netherlands. In language less mindful of his rank than descriptive of his conduct, they plainly and unequivocally charged Joseph with having violated the inaugural compact and oath, and not obscurely intimated, that a breach of a conditional contract by one of the parties absolved the other from its obligations. Those who were most favourable to the emperor, alleged, that the obnoxious edicts proceeded from mistaken views of the public good, and not from a design upon their liberties: according to such advocates he had suppressed the ancient tribunals, that the people might be enabled to obtain justice in a less expensive and more compendious way, and his alteration of the government was designed to give it more simplicity and energy: the small military force in the Low Countries was totally inadequate to the establishment of an absolute sovereignty; he had been deceived by partial and false representations, and misled by evil counsellors. The reply to this species of vindication was obvious; whether violation of their dearest rights proceeded from the despotic intentions, or the defective judgment of the sovereign, it was equally incumbent on subjects to defend their constitutional liberties: though the conduct of the emperor was, in all his dominions, such as to evince a narrow understanding, yet in the Netherlands, and every other part, it was so uniformly directed to one object, the invasion of property to increase his own revenue, that misinformation and erroneous reasoning did not account for its general tenor, *no person could be a systematic robber by mistake.*

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THE emperor's chief counsellor was the count Belgiojoso, his minister, a Milanese, a great favourite with his master; and who, possessing all the sublety, artifice, and crooked policy of an Italian statesman, was extremely disagreeable to the open, frank, and honest Flemings. The governor-general, the duke of Saxe Teschen and his wife, the archduchess, sister to the emperor, were extremely popular, and never suspected of promoting any unconstitutional designs; but the minister possessed the real power of government. Belgiojoso proceeded to a violent exercise of the powers so lawlessly usurped; indeed, if he had conceived a design of extending and consolidating a revolt, he could not have formed a more efficacious plan for the purpose: having excited the resentment of the civil orders, by the overthrow of the established judicature and legislature, he next attacked the clerical order, not as before, by suppressing certain fraternities, the least essential to the church, but those institutions which nourished its appropriate learning, preserved its most important rights, and that literature and science from which it chiefly derived its influence. The principal university of Brabant was the Louvain, one of the most celebrated schools of Roman catholic theology; distinguished for the extraordinary reverence with which it regarded the supreme pontiff, by its profound respect for the priesthood, and consequently highly prized by zealous votaries of the Romish church: all its colleges were abolished, and a general seminary was established, in which, by an edict, all youth designed for the church were required to pursue their theological studies. For this new school a German rector and professors were appointed, to the exclusion of native teachers. Such a change, violating the ecclesiastical constitution, and tending to introduce new doctrines of theology, was warmly opposed by the bishops, the university, and the people. The Low Countries, so

Progress of despotism, trampling liberty and franchises.

so long famous for the purity of their catholic faith; the Louvain, the nurse of holy religion, was to be contaminated with the heresies in which Germany abounded. The minister enjoined father Godefroy, visitor of the capuchins at Brussels, to send the young students of his order to be educated in the general seminary: this clegyman refused to comply. Belgiojoso commanded him to depart from Brussels in twenty-four hours, and the emperor's dominions in three days. Such a violent act afforded a new subject of complaint to those who were zealous in religion, and strengthened the abhorrence of the new seminary; but it increased the apprehensions of the progress of arbitrary power, which were already so generally entertained. The emperor and his counsellors appeared to have adopted, respecting his richest and most productive dominions, one of the most dangerous principles that can actuate the conduct of a government, *that subjects are merely to be considered as a source of revenue*, and the expediency of political plans and acts to be estimated by their tendency to supply the coffers of the prince. The discontents and commotions in the Netherlands very greatly diminished its financial efficiency, and consequently defeated the purpose which the authors of the innovations meant chiefly to promote. The minister pretending to impute the defalcation to contraband traffic, proceeded in a summary and arbitrary way against persons whom he professed to suspect to be engaged in such a commerce. One respectable and eminent merchant, who held a contract with government, was, after his accounts had been closed and passed, charged with a fraud: he challenged his accusers to make good their assertions by a fair and open trial, agreeably to the laws of his country; but, instead of a legal inquiry, he was seized by armed soldiers, and hurried away to Vienna. So flagrant a tyranny, joined to the general system, impressed the

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Joseph considers his Flemish subjects merely as sources of revenue.

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the people with a belief, that their only alternative was subjection to foreign despotism, or vigorous and immediate resistance.

Remonstrances of the Netherlanders.

In Brabant the constitution had been the most precise, and its violations the most manifest; and there the resistance was the most prompt. In Brussels the companies of arts and trades, nine in number, chose representatives, each known by the name of syndic: these delegates constituted a corporation, entitled the syndics of the nine nations; they possessed not only municipal power, but also very considerable political direction in the choice of members for the assembly of the states; and being composed of the chief citizens, they added extensive influence to their strength. This was the first public body which expressed its sentiments concerning the usurpations: they drew up a plain, bold memorial, that stated actual facts and obvious consequences; and enumerated the conditions on which the prince of the Low Countries held his sovereignty, as set forth in the Joyous Entry: the representation quoted Joseph's inaugural oath to observe the prescribed stipulations, and his actual conduct, which was a systematic violation of his engagements; and concluded, that "if the sovereign shall infringe upon the articles of the Joyous Entry, his subjects shall be discharged from all duty and service to him, until such time as due reparation shall be made for such infringements." This animated remonstrance inspirited and guided the other cities, and also the other provinces; and the people in general were determined to assert their rights; but before they should commence any active exertions, they waited the meeting of the states, that they might know how far they could trust to their counsel and co-operation.

Meeting of the states.

The assembly met, and the very first step demonstrated the firm and resolute part which they intended to act. An application having been made for

for subsidies, they totally refused to grant supplies until grievances were redressed; they sent immediate orders to the collectors of the revenues to pay no regard to the financial officers appointed by the new council, since they exercised an authority which was not admitted by the Flemish constitution: they then drew up a declaration of rights, a statement of grievances, and an exhibition of consequences, both more detailed and comprehensive than that of the syndics, and which avowed their determination to persevere in maintaining the constitution of their ancestors: this manifesto they addressed to the governor-general. At the same time Mr. Vandernoot, a counsellor of Brussels, and an eminent advocate in the cause of liberty, published a treatise addressed to the states, in which, from ancient documents, he traced out and elucidated the constitution of Brabant. The states not only ordered this treatise to be read in their presence, but decreed public thanks to the author, for having so ably and justly vindicated the rights of the people. The states of Flanders and Hainault concurred in the determination to resist all the unconstitutional changes. The governors-general endeavoured to break the force of the opposition by small concessions, and liberal promises: the Italian, to his great surprise, found that the Flemings were not to be intimidated; and, until he could be supplied with an adequate force, he had recourse to the more appropriate instruments of his country, duplicity and deception: the attempt, however, was now too late; the patriots persevered in their efforts, and held out to the minister the terrors of an ancient statute of Brabant, that declared it lawful to apprehend and to punish any person who should obstinately persist in obstructing the public good: they abolished the new seminaries and other unconstitutional innovations; urged the governors-general speedily to redress their grievances; and

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added, that the people were in such a ferment, that they could not answer for the consequences of longer delay. The minister had hitherto obstructed concessions on the side of the governors-general, but now pretended no longer to oppose conciliatory measures: alarmed at the revolution in the temper and dispositions of a people from whom they had before experienced the most affectionate attachment, the governors resolved, as far as their power extended, to restore the tranquillity and happiness of the provinces. They issued a decree on the 30th of May, declaring that all arrangements contrary to the Joyous Entry should be entirely set aside, and that due reparation should be made for all infringements on that great charter which the people held so sacred: they hoped the emperor would ratify this declaration, and promised to exert their utmost influence with him to accomplish such a desirable purpose. This proclamation at first diffused general joy through the Netherlands; but these sentiments were interrupted by doubts concerning the emperor's ratification. Joseph, instead of sanctioning the decree, dispatched a mandate to the states of the Low Countries, strongly expressing his astonishment, indignation, and displeasure, at those intemperate and violent measures which the states had adopted, and that bold defiance which they had given to his authority: his edicts had not been intended to subvert the constitution, but to correct ancient abuses, and to make salutary reforms. As a proof of their obedience, he required the states of each province to send deputies to Vienna, to lay their subjects of complaint at the foot of the throne. As a father he would pardon the errors and temerity of his subjects, but would severely punish them, if they continued refractory.

Disappointed by so imperious an order, and so unfounded reprehension, they did not sink under the

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1789. Deputies are sent to Vienna.

the insolent claims of usurped authority, but took vigorous measures for their own security. To prevent, however, matters from coming to extremities, they thought it prudent to comply to a certain extent with his requisition: they appointed deputies, entrusted with very limited powers, merely to express the loyalty of the nation, and to state their grievances, but to come to no conclusions respecting public affairs, without the special and immediate order of the states. While the deputies were on their journey, they were informed that great bodies of imperial troops were marching towards the Low Countries. Though this intelligence greatly agitated, yet it did not depress the minds of the Flemings: resolved to maintain their liberties at every hazard of their lives and fortunes, they calculated their strength and resources, and found them much superior to those with which the Dutch had formerly resisted Spanish despotism: they hoped for the interference of the powers that were already inimical to Joseph's ambition; and that France in particular would willingly accept of the sovereignty of the Netherland provinces, so beneficial and commodious, upon the constitutional conditions which they would most gladly offer. The governors-general having been called to Vienna, to be present when the deputies should appear before the emperor, count Murray, a nobleman of Scottish extraction, commander of the Austrian troops in the Netherlands, was appointed governor during their absence. This officer, a man of prudence and temper, endeavoured to accommodate matters by moderating the fervour of the people, and the imperiousness of the sovereign. The Flemings, meanwhile, were turned with the most anxious expectation to the reception of their deputies at Vienna; and the first accounts were very far from being satisfactory. When presented to the emperor they were received with all that angry haughti-

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haughtiness which narrow understandings and illiberal sentiments in power produce to real or supposed inferiors, when they are the objects of displeasure. Undismayed by imperious insolence, the deputies stated their grievances; but Joseph informed them, that before he would vouchsafe to explain himself upon that subject, there were certain preliminary articles that count Murray would communicate to his states: the articles were, that things should be restored to the same footing in which they had stood at the meeting of the states; that the new tribunal council and seminaries abolished by the Flemings should be restored, the subsidies paid, and the volunteers dismissed: if these articles were not executed, the Austrian army should proceed in its march to the Netherlands.

THE Flemings, with great indignation refused to comply, and between volunteer corps, and parties of soldiers, quarrels and skirmishes arose, not without the effusion of blood; every thing, notwithstanding the conciliatory efforts of count Murray, seemed tending to hostilities, when dispatches arriving from the deputies totally changed the public sentiments; by these it appeared, that harsh as the first reception of the deputies had been, at succeeding interviews the emperor had declared, that though he had thought it consistent with the dignity of his throne to testify his displeasure at the violent proceedings of his Flemish subjects, he was really favourable to their requests; and though he would not consent to the re-establishment of convents, nor to restore the nomination of abbots, he would grant all the other principal articles: he never proposed [p] to enforce his edicts by arms, and was willing to restore the Joyous Entry to its primitive vigour; he intended to visit the Netherlands, and to concert measures with the states for the welfare.

Joseph pretends to grant their requests.

[p] See Declaration of the emperor to the states of the Belgic Provinces; State Papers, July 3. 1787.

of his people. These agreeable declarations were accompanied with an unassuming and engaging politeness, which manifested, if not the ability of a statesman, the versatility of a courtier. The deputies were so captivated with the manners and address of the emperor, that they received every assurance and profession with unbounded faith: their constituents, though not so implicit in their confidence, yet were greatly pleased, and at last agreed to pay the subsidies into the royal treasury, as a mark of their reliance on the emperor's protestations. The count Murray in return published a declaration from the emperor, by which the Joyous Entry of Brabant was to be preserved entire, as well with respect to the ecclesiastical as the civil orders; the new tribunals were to be suppressed, and the ancient courts of judicature to resume their function. The sovereign promised, that whatever infraction had been made upon the Joyous Entry, he would employ measures for granting redress. This accommodation between the emperor and his subjects diffused a general joy through the Low Countries. But the moderate system now adopted by Joseph, by discerning politicians, was imputed to particular circumstances, and not to any deviation from his general principles of action. In his innovating plan he had proceeded on the supposition, that the Netherlanders would make no material opposition, and that his wishes might be accomplished without distracting his attention, or withdrawing his force from the execution of his other schemes. From the spirit and vigorous conduct of the Flemings he saw that they could not be brought to submission without a considerable army, the employment of which in that service would weaken his efforts against the Turks; he therefore abandoned one unjustifiable project of aggression, that he might the more effectually promote another; and it was inferred, that really he had only post-

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poned his design respecting the Low Countries to a more favourable opportunity. The great object of Joseph appears to have been to establish one simple uniform military system of government through all the parts of his vast dominions. This purpose was obstructed in the Netherlands by the present concession: there were, besides, important articles left unsettled, which might be the ground of future dispute. His expressions, upon being more closely examined than during the first ebullitions of joy, were found to be general and vague. On reflection, the Flemings perceived that they held no pledge from the sovereign but his promises, while in disbanding the militia they had given the most solid and substantial security on their part. The emperor, after he had expressed his approbation of the lenient and conciliatory conduct of count Murray, appointed another commander in chief, who had no local connections in the Netherlands; this was general Dalton, a soldier of fortune from Ireland, brave and enterprising, but whose principle of conduct was simply obedience to his master's orders, whatever they might be, or whatever rights they might violate. He had been employed against the rebellious mountaineers of Transylvania, and acquired considerable reputation by his military efforts; but had been noted for the cruelty with which he treated his prisoners. Count Trautmansdorff was appointed to the civil government, to the great satisfaction of the Low Countries, as he was a man of very amiable dispositions, and extremely popular; but it soon was found, that in power he was totally subordinate to Dalton. The governors-general were by the emperor's new plan to be mere pageants of state and splendor, without any share of the government.[a]

Sends general Dalton to the Netherlands.

[a] Annual Register, 1787, chap. viii.
[b] Annual Register, 1789, p. 38.

THE

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1789. Despotic conduct of that officer.

THE first manifestation of the emperor's perseverance in the plan which he pretended to relinquish, was an attack upon the university of Louvain. While the Flemings were cherishing the hopes of preserving their revered constitution, and indulging the convivial festivity of the Christmas season, exhilarated by the flattering prospect, a peremptory order arrived in the emperor's name to the members of Louvain university, commanding them, without deliberation, delay, or remonstrance, immediately to enregister in their archives, and submit to, the system of reform prescribed by the sovereign. These mandates, the university peremptorily refused to obey; they pleaded their constitutional rights, and appealed to the laws and justice of their country for protection. The minister, in his reply to this appeal, propounded a very simple and comprehensive principle, *that subjects must not plead rights, laws, justice, or their constitution, against the will of the sovereign.* Declarations were issued, commanding them to conform to the mandates of the emperor, and threatening the severest vengeance against all persons who should dare to assert a right contrary to the will of his imperial majesty. These dictatorial menaces were totally disregarded by the university, which was determined to assert its freedom. Count Trautmansdorff was now become entirely subservient to Dalton, and in his conduct showed, that the amiable dispositions and pleasing manners which had rendered him so popular, were not fortified by vigour, or secured by virtuous principles. This minister, by the direction of Dalton, sent a letter to the grand council of Brabant, requiring their efforts to reduce to obedience the refractory university, and specifying the time before which the mandate was to be executed: the council, with a dignified indignation, replied, that the letter was founded in ignorance of their laws, tended to despotism,

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potism, and must be revoked. The minister replied, that it was his majesty's absolute determination, that *on whatever subject he signified his will, obedience must follow;* and he gave them twenty-four hours for publishing the decree. His commination being still disregarded, the following day he sent a notice, that if the decrees were not published within two hours, he should have recourse to the dire expedient of cannon and bayonets, which his majesty had most expressly prescribed. The council still paid not the smallest attention to those insolent threats; Dalton drew up a regiment of infantry near the council-house, and ordered an ensign with a party of troops to patrole the streets. This officer, young, inexperienced, and desirous of showing power, on some trifling disturbance, ordered his men to fire a platoon among the multitude, killed six of the people, and wounded many more: the juvenile instrument of military despotism and murder, dreading the just vengeance of the people, hastily fled with his party to the main body of soldiers. The emperor informed of this achievement, highly applauded the ensign's conduct, and desired Dalton to inform him he *might expect promotion* on the first vacancy: he also expressed his warmest gratitude to Dalton for *supporting the dignity of the military character, and impressing the people with a due dread of the soldiers.* This massacre, *unimportant* (THE EMPEROR SAID) *as it was in itself,* might produce a salutary effect; but to insure obedience it was necessary for Dalton *to persevere in the same meritorious conduct.*[s] The army being once employed against the people, constant insolence and frequent bloodshed were the result. The people expressed their indignation in riots and tumults: one of these being quelled without firing a shot, the emperor, in a letter to his ministers, testified his disappro-

[s] Annual Register, 1789.

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bation of such forbearance, and desired it might not be repeated. Trautmansdorff declared, that if the troops serving in the Netherlands were not sufficient, forty thousand men would immediately enter the Low Countries: this assertion his hearers well knew to be a boasting bravado, as the emperor's troops were elsewhere fully employed. It is frequently difficult to discover the precise motive for conduct which is dictated by unprincipled wickedness, and guided by extreme folly. As Joseph's armies were engaged in the Turkish war, policy obviously dictated forbearance of injustice and tyranny in the west, that he might effectually promote aggression and spoliation in the east. His force in the Low Countries was very inadequate to his despotic purposes, or to the cruel intentions of his deputy. At the very time that the emperor was enjoining perseverance in military despotism to his willing and prompt underling, he, through the governors-general, issued a declaration, setting forth his tender affection to his subjects, his desire of satisfying their wishes, the complete return of his favour, and his determination to give the Low Countries most convincing proofs of his benevolence and confidence. Flagrant as the duplicity of these professions were, their uselessness was no less obvious; force, not deception, was his instrument of government; the soldiers could not the more easily massacre one man by proclaiming to him the *tender feelings* of their employers: it was a mere waste of falsehood, which could answer none of the assertor's purposes; more resembling the capricious versatility of a froward child, than the steady policy of a firm man, resolute in wicked designs.

The interpreter of the emperor's tenderness was Dalton; among the sources of Dalton's fame acquired in Transylvania was a *gallows*[t] of an extra-

[t] Annual Register, 1789, chap. ii.

ordinary

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ordinary height for hanging insurgents; and he declared his determination to erect an edifice of a like construction in the great square at Brussels. He now went to establish at Louvain the new professors of divinity; and to reform the errors of the theological schools, the argument employed was the bayonet: the rector and professors were ejected by a file of musqueteers, and the new teachers were established by the same authority. To celebrate the admission of the imperial instructors in theology, the soldiers murdered a great number of the inhabitants[u], who could not refrain from assembling to pay the last tribute of grief at the overthrow of an institution, which had for so many ages been the pride and support of their city. But although soldiers could inaugurate persons appointed to *teach* the Christian system according to the imperial canons of orthodoxy, they could not compel students to *learn*: the pupils had universally abandoned the colleges, and the masters were left to deliver their lessons, either in empty halls, or without any hearers, but their military coadjutors. At Malines and Antwerp the massacre was much more extensive than even at Louvain; and personal security was deemed so precarious in the Netherlands, that some of the nobility, and a great number of other inhabitants of distinction and property, sought refuge in exile. The cruel executions committed upon a defenceless people by their rulers, in a season of peace and most profound tranquillity, excited the abhorrence of the neighbouring nations, and procured asylums for the unfortunate sufferers. Confiscation, despotism, and military execution being once established, property, liberty, and life being insecure, those that still remained in the country withdrew their capitals from manufactures and com-

Effects of his tyranny.

[u] Annual Register, 1789, chap. ii.

merce,

merce, and vested them in foreign funds, as a provision for their own flights, and repositories which Dalton's bayonets could not reach. In a country so recently eminent for industry and the arts, trade was entirely stagnant, and every occupation ceased, except those which minister to the necessity of life: revenue proportionably declined; fiscal productiveness, the great object of the emperor's tyranny, experienced a most important diminution: the states of Brabant announced a determination, under the present outrageous tyranny, to withhold the supplies. Such was the state of affairs at the close of 1788. CHAP. XLII. 1789.

Farther cruelty and robbery by Joseph.

THE emperor published an edict, annulling all his former concessions, even recalling his inaugural oath to maintain the Joyous Entry; and all the obnoxious establishments of 1787 were to be speedily restored. The grand council of Brabant having refused to sanction so despotic an edict, that constitutional tribunal was suppressed; the management of the revenue, which had formed one of its delegated departments, was vested in a commission nominated by the emperor: no abbots were thenceforth to be appointed in Brabant, and thus the clerical order was about to be suppressed; the commons were to be new-modelled, according to the emperor's pleasure; the right of granting subsidies was to be no longer vested in the states, but in a council appointed by the emperor; the Joyous Entry was to be abolished; the whole government and all its parts were to be modelled according to the imperial will. A considerable part of the year 1789 was employed in executing these nefarious projects of infatuated ambition. The enmity to the clergy, and rapacity for money, two predominant features in the emperor's character, combined in dictating his most extensive and systematic schemes of robbery. By one decree he sequestered all the

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abbeys of Brabant, and appointed civil officers to manage their revenues for his use.[x]

1789.

SUCH a seizure of property, in a country which had so long enjoyed the blessings of a free constitution, and of ecclesiastical possessions, among a people so devoutly attached to the priesthood, excited very general resentment, and open remonstrances from men, who already indignantly brooded over their fallen constitution, and meditated the reassertion of their rights: they resolved no longer to yield even the appearance of submission, either to subordinate tyranny, or the imperial despot himself. Stimulated to resistance by the strongest motives which can inspirit generous breasts; considering death as preferable to slavery; and recalling to their minds those gallant exertions by which a kindred people had emancipated themselves from an Austrian despot in the sixteenth century, they trusted that with much greater resources, against a foe less powerful, they would be no less successful in resisting an Austrian despot of the eighteenth[y]; besides their own resources, so valuable and efficacious, in the riches, population, and spirit of the

The Flemings resolve on forcible resistance.

[x] The author of Dodsley's Annual Register, 1791, having attentively considered the detail of the spoliations, says, that he suppressed no less than a hundred and sixty monastic establishments, and that the only precaution he appears to have used was, that in this great suppression the men were more favoured than the women: of the male convents, only forty were sequestered: of the nunneries, one hundred and twenty.

[y] There was a considerable resemblance between the conduct of Joseph II. and his ancestor Philip II. of Spain: though the former was the professed champion of toleration, the latter of intolerance, the principle of both was much more nearly allied than would appear from a superficial view of their respective objects. Each sought to model the opinions of mankind according to his will; each endeavoured to effect his purpose by violence; each was cruel in persecuting all those who opposed his system; each was imperious and despotical; both were ambitious without ability, restless without enterprise, aggressive and usurping in intention, mighty in project, but futile in execution, and unsuccessful in event. Philip, the creature of imitation, was the implicit votary of priestcraft: Joseph, the creature of imitation, was the implicit votary of infidelity: neither of them were guided by sound reasoning and original reflection: both, in supporting their favourite tenets, and gratifying malignant passions, did much mischief; but attempted much more than their incapacity suffered them to perpetrate.

people,

people, and nature of the country, they might reasonably expect support from the arms of Prussia, and even of her maritime confederates. The emperor was engaged in the Turkish war, and his force greatly impaired by the disastrous events which it had produced: though emigration was very prevalent, yet the refugees chiefly sought shelter in the most adjacent states, and had greatly promoted the cause of their countrymen by describing the dreadful oppressions from which they had fled. With the emigrants the Flemish patriots maintained a very close correspondence, and concerted with them the plan and commencement of open resistance. Dalton, meanwhile, dispatched part of his troops to seize every person supected of disaffection, and carred the system of proscription and murder to a more enormous extent than at any former period of his tyranny, while Trautmansdorff acted as the civil instrument of oppression. A conspiracy was formed to blow up the houses of these tyrants with gunpowder; during the confusion to seize the gates of Brussels and the arsenal, and admit bodies of emigrants, who were prepared, and to be ready at hand for that purpose: the execution of this plot was fixed for August, 1789; but being discovered, a great number of suspected persons were apprehended. While the ministers were inflicting summary punishments, the vigorous proceedings of the patriots called their attention to more formidable objects. About the middle of September, 1789, the duke of Ursel, and the prince of Aremburg, count of la Marck, his son, with the other nobles who had retired to Breda, were joined by the archbishop of Malines or Mechlin, primate of the catholic provinces of the Netherlands, and by most if not all the states of Brabant, both civil and ecclesiastical, were constituted and declared to be the regular and legal assembly of the states of that province [z]: they framed and unani-

[z] See Annual Register for 1791, p. 32.

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1789. Declaration of rights.

mously passed a remonstrance to the emperor, declaring their rights, and their resolutions to maintain them against every violator: they were prepared to sacrifice their lives and fortunes for a sovereign who should govern them constitutionally, but they would not surrender those privileges which they held in trust for their fellow-citizens, and for posterity: they adjured him to spare them the cruel necessity of appealing to God and their swords.

THE declaration of the states, so contrary to his despotic sentiments and views, highly enraged the emperor, and he gave orders for increased severity, and violence of military execution. The Belgians saw no hopes of redress, but by their swords, and in October, 1789 they hoisted the standard of revolt: a body of insurgents took the two small forts of Lillo and Liefenshock on the Scheldt: in fort Lillo, besides the military stores, they found a considerable sum of money. Dalton sent general Schroeder against the invaders, at the head of four thousand troops, well disciplined. On the advance of this force the insurgents abandoned the two forts, and retreated towards Furnhout, a small town about eight miles from the forts: the imperialists pursued them to the gates, and forcing these open entered the town: the Brabanters retreating from the main street, drew the Austrians after them, until they were inclosed in the market place; there the patriots firing from the adjoining houses, windows, and lanes did great execution; the regulars being thus ensnared, and unable to extricate themselves, were broken and defeated, and compelled to retreat with the loss of seven hundred men. Hope, encouraged by success, roused all the patriotic and martial ardour of the Belgians: assuming the name of the patriotic army, they penetrated into the heart of the country: in the other provinces, as well as Brabant, the votaries of freedom flocked to the standard erected for its preservation, and burned with impatience

patience to join their brethren in the field, that they might contribute their efforts to deliver their country from foreign tyrants. In the beginning of November a battle was fought at Tirlemont: a body of patriots having been pursued by Bender, an Austrian general, had taken refuge in this place, and were warmly supported by its patriotic inhabitants. Bender having entered the town, was very vigorously received by the Flemings, and after an obstinate contest compelled to retreat. The Netherlanders now ventured to meet their adversaries in the open field, and having gained a complete victory, took possession of Ostend, Bruges, and Louvain. Animated by these successes, they had the boldness to attack the strong city of Ghent: having entered the town, they assailed, and defeated the enemy in the streets; and compelled one part of them to fly for refuge to the barracks, while another sought shelter in the citadel. The third day of the siege the barracks surrendered; the defendants of the citadel finding they could no longer retain the place, committed the most infamous enormities in the streets, but soon evacuated the garrison: the defence of Ghent was by no means adequate in either vigour or skill to the force by which it was guarded. Joseph, desirous of winning his soldiers, had given directions for allowing them great laxity; the troops who were in the Netherlands, besides being recently free-booters, and accustomed to trample on the defenceless inhabitants, conceived a most thorough contempt for the Flemings; but when they came to battle, and were compelled to face the enemy on equal terms, they showed themselves to have totally deviated from the characters of Austrian soldiers, and to be as dastardly as they were profligate. The reduction of Ghent was of the greatest consequence to the Flemish patriots; and the more especially as it enabled the states of Flanders to assemble in that capital of the province, for the purpose of legalising

The patriots defeat the Austrian troops.

They form themselves into a federal republic.

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legalising their public proceedings, giving a form to their intended new constitution, and concluding a league and federal union with the other provinces. The emperor informed of the great successes of the Flemish patriots, descended from his despotic haughtiness, and endeavoured by amicable promises to conciliate his late subjects; he exhorted the malcontents to lay down their arms, and to trust for the redress of real grievances to his clemency and paternal affection: dreadful consequences (he said) would ensue if they compelled him to relinquish the conquests which he was now prosecuting, and pour into the Netherlands armies that were now gathering laurels from a foreign enemy. Endeavouring partly to justify, and partly to explain his most obnoxious acts, he offered to revoke the offensive edicts, to comply with all their former demands, and to grant a general, full, and perpetual amnesty to all who should return to their duty within a specified but distant time, the leaders of the revolt alone excepted: but the Flemings had been too often deceived by Joseph to repose any confidence in his professions; and they now paid the less attention to his overtures, that from their successes they began to deem themselves no longer dependent on his power. On the 20th of November the states of Flanders seized on the sovereign authority in their province, and in imitation of their Dutch neighbours, assumed the title of high and mighty states: they passed resolutions, declaring the emperor to have forfeited all title to the sovereignty of the Netherlands; for raising organising, and disciplining an army, and uniting themselves with the states of Brabant. The ardour and success of their countrymen inspired the inhabitants of Brussels with the desire and hope of rescuing their capital from the despotic ministers of Joseph. Intimidated by the victories of the Flemings, Dalton confined himself within the

the walls, and ordered the gates to be strictly guarded: his force consisted of about six thousand men, whereas the patriotic band did not exceed one thousand: the soldiers were, however, dispersed through different parts of the city; their adversaries were at a fixed rendezvous to form a compact body, which assailing the scattered enemy, by throwing them into partial confusion might cause general disorder, and animate the other citizens to join in the conflict. This gallant design was executed: the Flemish band defeated an Austrian detachment in one of the streets; the battle became general, and the insurgents got possession of the barracks, with two thousand muskets, and plenty of ammunition. Dalton retreated to the great square, where, attempting to defend himself, he was obliged to capitulate, and to give up Brussels, on being allowed to escape with his garrison: he accordingly retired to Luxemburg: Trautmansdorff, with the other chief members of the government, withdrew to Liege. The governors-general, from their popularity, were not afraid of any violence, yet as the emperor's sovereignty was no longer acknowledged, they betook themselves into Germany. The Flemings, in their victories, far from imitating the brutal cruelty of the imperial despot's soldiers, killed no one but in battle. Having thus made themselves masters of the chief towns, after celebrating the most solemn institution of religion, they restored the ancient courts of justice, rescinded all the emperor's innovating edicts, settled the exercise of the sovereign power, and completely re-established tranquillity. The states of Brabant being assembled at Brussels, on the last day of the year 1789, bound themselves by oath, in the presence of the citizens, to preserve the rights, privileges, and constitution of their country, and then proceeded to administer the same oath to the members of the sovereign council

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of Brabant, amidst the general acclamations of the people. The other provinces, except Limburgh, having concluded similar engagements concerning their respective internal constitutions, all the Austrian Netherlands, Limburgh excepted, formed themselves into a federal republic, to be distinguished by the title of the United Belgic States. Such was the result of the restless changes, rapacity and usurpations of the emperor Joseph.

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Retrospective view of France.—Old government.—Character and spirit of France under Louis XIV.—Sources of submission to arbitrary power—commencing and progressive change under Louis XV.—Beginning of infidelity.—Voltaire and his disciples.—Beginning of anti-monarchism.—Rousseau supposes man a perfectible being.—Progress of his doctrines through the efforts of literature.—Co-operating political causes.—General impolicy and burdensome expence of the French wars against Great Britain.—Enormous expenditure and distressful consequences of the war to support our revolted colonies.—Pecuniary embarrassments.—Various schemes of alleviation.—Convention of the notables.—Calonne unfolds the dreadful state of the finances.—Calonne proposes an equalisation of public burdens—incenses the privileged orders.—Outcry against the minister—disgraced—retires into banishment.—Brienne minister.—Trifling and inefficient reforms.—Contests with parliaments.—Attempts of the crown to overawe the refractory—unsuccessful.—Arbitrary suspension of parliaments.—National ferment.—Distressed situation of the king—abandoned by many of his courtiers—resolves to recall Mr. Neckar—who consults the convocation of the states-general.—Question concerning the consolidation of the orders.—Meeting of the states.—Commons propose to meet in one chamber—opposed by the crown.—Commons constitute themselves a national assembly, without regard to the other orders.—Violence of demagogues.—Soldiers infected with the popular enthusiasm—insubordination and licentiousness.—King orders troops to approach to Paris.—Popular leaders prepare to defend the capital.—An army of volunteers immediately raised—attack the royal magazines to procure arms—assail the Bastile.—Subversion of the old government.—Declaration of rights—fundamental principle, the RIGHTS OF MAN.*—First acts of the revolutionists—power—great and general object to subvert establishment—to that object all the whole energies of the*

French

French genius and character exerted. — Licentiousness of the press. — Twenty thousand literary men employ themselves in stimulating the mob to outrage. — An engine of government new in the history of political establishments — CLUBS *— influence of — extended by association — doctrines — influence and operation. — Lawless violence in the country. — Peasants turn upon the proprietors. — Some of the nobility propose to sacrifice a large portion of their privileges and property — their example imitated and emulated. — Sacrifices of the nobles and clergy. — Admiration of the commons. — Proposition for the seizure of church property — remonstrances of the clergy — disregarded. — Parliaments annihilated. — Immunities sacrificed. — The law and policy of the kingdom overturned. — Scheme for voluntary contributions. — Gold and silver sent to the mint. — Preparations for the new constitution — the authority to be possessed by the king. — Suspensive* VETO. *— Question, if the assembly was to be composed of one or two chambers — carried, that there should be only one. — English constitution proposed as a model — rejected. — French commons inimical to mixed government — settlement of the succession. — Ferocity of the people — inflamed by scarcity. — Additional troops arrive at Versailles — entertainment given by the officers in the palace to the new comers. — The royal family visit the banqueting room. — Music describes the sufferings of a captive prince. — The queen having in her arms the infant dauphin presents him to the officers — the ladies of the court accompany her. — Effects of beauty, music, and wine, combined. — Unguarded enthusiasm of the loyal soldiers — trample on the national cockade. — Report of this entertainment at Paris. — Rage and indignation of the revolutionists. — Activity and influence of the fishwomen and courtezans. — The mob determines to bring the king to Paris — expedition of the women for that purpose — hang priests and aristocrats — march to Versailles — overawe the legislature — break into the assembly and take possession of the speaker's chair. — Mob assault the palace — attempt to murder the queen — prevented by the heroism of her defenders. — King and queen agree to depart for Paris. — Mournful procession of a degraded monarch. — Farther proceedings at Paris. — The existing government endeavoured to quell the mob — severe prosecutions for that purpose. — Effects of the French revolution in Britain. — Detesting the old French government and not acquainted with the new, Britons approve of*

the

the revolution as friendly to liberty. — Sentiments of various classes — respectively differing, concur in favouring the French revolution.

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1789.

THE event which rendered the year 1789 most important to Britons and all the civilised world, was the French revolution, the causes and means of which extraordinary change it requires a retrospective view of the scene of operation to investigate and comprehend. The government of France was, in the earlier ages, one of those feudal aristocracies, which the northern conquerors established over Europe. The degree of civil and political liberty that extended to the commons was very inconsiderable in France, as in most other countries, except England and the Netherlands. The power of the king in the middle ages was extremely limited; the country consisted of a collection of principalities, in each of which the lord superior enjoyed an arbitrary sway, and held the people in a condition of abject vassalage. This state of relative power in the vicissitudes of human affairs underwent material changes. The kings had one general object, diminution of baronial authority: prudence required the barons to unite for their common advantage, yet they had respectively separate interests which much more constantly occupied their attention. By sowing discord between these turbulent chieftains, the sovereigns rendered their aggregate force less formidable. Conquests, escheats, or treaties, united several fiefs to the crown: Louis XI. considerably reduced the power of the nobility, the feudal aristocracy was entirely destroyed by cardinal Richelieu, and the separate sovereignties were consolidated into one entire mass.[a] As the people had been without liberty under feudal lords, they continued to be in ser-

Old government of France.

[a] See Introduction to this History.

vitude

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vitude under the monarch: before the total reduction of the aristocracy, they had indeed possessed an assembly of states, but so modelled, that the commons had little real share of the power: the nobles and clergy were closely connected by immunities and other privileges, and could easily overpower the third estate. From the administration of Richelieu, France had been without even the appearance of a legislative voice; every privilege of the subject was under the control of a government habitually corrupt and tyrannical. The men of wealth and distinction were purchased either by courtly honours, presents, pensions, or a lavish waste of the public revenue, which was endeavoured to be exclusively wrung from the grasp of the poor, the weak, and the laborious. Liberty and even life were insecure, if either interfered with the will of the prince. Instead of making a part subservient to the whole; estimating either permanent regulations, or temporary measures, by the aggregate of happiness which they were calculated to produce, the old government of France administered the whole according to the pleasure and caprice of a very small part; the comfort and welfare of twenty-four millions was of little account when compared with the freak or fancy of the prince, the interest or inclination of his favourites. The suggestion of a priest or a prostitute would desolate a whole province[b], and drive from that country its most industrious inhabitants. The nobility and clergy, and also the magistrates, were exempted from their share of the public burdens; the taxes, instead of being paid by the rich and the great, fell upon the poor. These tyrannical exactions were rendered more cruelly oppressive by the established mode of extortion; the revenue

[b] See in Render's Tour through Germany an account of the devastation of the Palatinate.

was

was farmed, and farther leased by the principal undertakers to others, and by these to subordinate collectors with advance of rent; in the various steps of intermediation between the payer of the impost and the government, much greater sums were squeezed from the commons than ever found their way to the public treasury. The farmers of the revenue principally constituted the monied class, or at least, were the greatest capitalists [c]; in them government had its chief resource for loans to carry on the projects of extravagant ambition, and infatuated aggression. Many of the nobility from their prodigality were poor notwithstanding their immunities and donatives, and from these men had the means of supply; the court, therefore, very readily connived at most flagrant extortions in the administration of the revenue, as the commons only were to suffer by the spoliation.

Character and spirit of France under Louis XIV. and XV.

THE old government of France was, no doubt, liable to these and other objections, both in its principles and practice; and in the reigns of Louis XIV. and XV. it was a very arbitrary and oppressive system. Its vices appeared the more glaring to political observers, by being contrasted with the constitution of the neighbour and rival of France. Perhaps, indeed, this circumstance produced to that system still less estimation than it really deserved. To Britons it would have been an intolerable scheme of policy, and must have crushed the energy of the British character, which in a great measure results from civil and political liberty; but a greater or less degree of restraint is necessary according to the knowledge and dispositions of a nation as well as an individual. The French minds, sentiments, and habits, appeared to require a stronger curb than the British; but on the other hand, the authorities which were to control the violence, regulate the

[c] Annual Register, 1787 and 1789.

vivacity,

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vivacity, and guide the versatile instability of the Gallic character, were by no means well placed. The power was not exerted for rendering the greatest benefit to the subjects which even their tempers would admit; it was much much more arbitrary than was expedient for a civilised people to tolerate. The great mass of the commons were in a state of slavery to the priests, the nobles, and the officers of the crown[d]; such a condition only profound ignorance, fear, or infatuation could suffer. It was natural for intelligent and ingenious men to see the imperfections of the arbitrary government, and to wish for a reform of various abuses. The splendid actions of Louis XIV., notwithstanding their real impolicy, dazzled his subjects; his ostentatious diplays to other nations of his superiority, so flattering to the predominant vanity of the French character, rendered them eager partisans of their great monarch. Instrumental to the glory of the sovereign, they thought they were promoting their own! Vanity assumed the disguise of honour; and in gratifying the prince, and courting his approbation, they overlooked their own condition; they forgot they were bearing slavery, encountering war, poverty, and starvation, merely as puppets in the hands of a vain-glorious tyrant.[e] Under Louis XIV. their subserviency was very abject, but it arose from causes that could not be permanent, and, indeed, from a certain operation of passions and energies, which, in another direction, might readily attempt, and powerfully affect the dissolution of their fetters. Submission to arbitrary power arises from various causes, and operates differently according to the diversities of national characters; often it may proceed from barbarous ignorance and intellectual debasement, which mindful of only animal wants thinks not of any higher enjoyments than the supply

Sources of submission to arbitrary power.

[d] New Annual Register, 1789.

[e] Smollett's Continuation of Hume, vol. i.

of these[f]; a phlegmatic temper that does not feel injustice and oppression; or from relaxtion, indolence, and timidity, which, notwithstanding a knowledge of right, and a feeling of wrong, prevents strenuous efforts for vindication and redress; servitude in these cases is a *passive principle*. The French were very far from being void of knowledge, sensibility, courage, or active exertion: on the contrary, they were intelligent, ardent, bold, and enterprising, but their passions engaged their ingenuity and their force in supporting and aggrandising their absolute monarch. Submission to arbitrary power, in them love for the sovereign, a STRONGLY ACTIVE PRINCIPLE; theirs was implicit obedience yielded by strength, not despotism forced upon weakness. The French animation was extremely eager in the pursuit of pleasure as its levity was very fond of pageantry and shew. The magnificent profusion of Louis and his court was well adapted for increasing the popularity acquired by political and military achievements; the high admiration, or rather the adoration with which his subjects regarded this monarch, soon excited in their warm and enthusiastic minds an ardent affection for the whole royal family, and indeed all the princes of the blood; they associated the ideas of estimation for royalty with military prowess. These effects were, as long as they lasted, very favourable to the continuance and extension of absolute sway, but the causes were perfectly compatible with totally different sentiments. Under Louis XV. the French long continued ardent in loyalty, and manifested their affection and reverence for the kingly name in implicit obedience to the mandates of his most christian majesty; but while energy was exerting itself in the boldest enterprise for promoting the great monarch's glory, props of his power were beginning to be impaired. From the middle of his reign the Roman catholic

Commencing and progressive change under Louis XV.

[f] As in the case of the negroes, see Park's Travels, passim.

faith

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faith commenced its decline, and towards the close the political power of the sovereign received a considerable shake.

Beginnings of infidelity.

THE abandoned debauchery of the court under the duke of Orleans's regency had prepared the higher ranks for the infusion of infidelity which was afterwards so extensively received. The first movers of this scheme of irreligion were certain votaries of literature, who employed men of high rank as their instruments. Learning became daily more prevalent in Europe, and having been fostered in France by the ostentatious vanity of Louis XIV., though limited during his reign to subjects of taste, sentiment, and natural philosophy, afterwards extended to theology, ethics, and politics. Voltaire was admirably fitted for impressing the susceptibility, gratifying the taste, amusing the fancy, inflaming the passions, and so misleading the judgment of lively, refined, ingenious, ardent, and volatile readers and hearers: he, therefore, was thoroughly skilled in the most effectual means of attacking the faith of Frenchmen. Vanity materially assisted the infidel's operations: the nobility having imbibed under Louis XIV. a relish for literature, and still more for literary patronage, were desirous of cultivating, or appearing to cultivate, intimacy with a man of so high rank in letters, repeated his doctrines and witticisms, and abandoned their religion to pass for philosophers. Besides, the debauchery of Louis XIV., carried by his pupil the duke of Orleans to a much more profligate excess, and not much corrected under the mature age of Louis XV., established in the morals of courtiers a powerful auxiliary for spreading infidelity. The ridiculous absurdity of many of the popish doctrines was easily discernible to French sagacity when turned to such animadversions: and their various mummeries afforded scope to the French wit and satire, when permitted to take such a range.

Voltaire.

range. Gallic ingenuity could easily find arguments to expose the frivolity and folly of many of their priestly doctrines, rites, and observances; but as ardent as versatile, leaving their superstitions, they took the opposite and much more dangerous extreme. Some of the king's ministers, pleased with the theories of the Voltaire school, and converted by his jokes, became deists, made the king inimical to various parts of the ecclesiastical establishment, and inspired him with a desire of reforming the church. This reform both in France and other countries arose partly from a diminished regard for the established church, but principally from the love of plunder: its consequences were a degradation of the clerical character to a much lower state than was requisite for the purposes of spiritual and moral instruction. The suppression of the religious orders, and the general system of policy towards the church, from the peace of Paris to the end of the duke de Choiseul's administration, tended very powerfully to second the efforts of deistical writers against the church. Indeed the acts of Louis XV. at the instigation of his favourites, were powerfully efficient causes, though not the proximate, of the downfal of religion in the reign of his successor. It is by no means a difficult undertaking for a man of genius to establish a new sect in religion or politics: if he mean to mislead the judgment, he has only by animated description to impress the imagination, or by impassioned eloquence to impel the affections.[g] Voltaire was very successful in the use of these instruments: other literary adventurers readily pursued a track leading so directly to esteem and patronage. Under such influence, projects and institutions were

[g] Whitfield, Wesley, and other adventurers of a more recent date clearly and strongly illustrate the facility with which ingenuity fashioning itself to the fancies and passions of men, may impress a new hypothesis of religion.

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formed for circulating their doctrines. By such influence, projects, and institutions[h], infidelity made very rapid advances; except in the lower classes of people, in the latter period of the reign of Louis XV. the majority of laity in France were deists. Opinions and sentiments so inimical not only to absolute monarchy, but to every form of regular government, are indebted for their disseminations to the imbecility of Louis XV., and the narrow views of his ministers. The same spirit of free enquiry not being properly understood or wisely modified by the court of France, from exposing the absurdities of many popish observances proceeded to attack Christianity itself, and soon extended to politics. In their efforts against superstition, the philosophists, in the violent ardour of the French character, rushing to the opposite extreme, pulled up the wheat as well as the tares; the same operators, employed on the same materials, using a similar process in politics, produced similar effects; and in both, seeking to avoid one evil, without discriminating it from the good in which it was mixed, they incurred a greater. Speculating upon the rights and happiness of man, they easily saw that the government of France was very far from being well adapted to the security of rights or the diffusion of happiness. The ingenuity of Frenchmen has, in most subjects of study, exhibited itself much more frequently in framing hypotheses than in collecting facts, investigating principles, and deducing consequences from actually established premises. This mode of procedure, well adapted to the poet's invention, was employed in cases which required the reasoning of the philosopher, and the wisdom of the sage. A position was assumed by Helvetius and many others, but above all by Rousseau, that man was a perfectible being, and that every change of system was to be

Commencement of antimonarchical doctrines.

[h] See Barruel on Jacobinism, vol. i. *passim*.

adapted

adapted to the perfection which he might attain. While Voltaire and his sect were labouring to undermine existing establishments, Helvetius, Rousseau, and their sects, besides rendering a helping hand to the scheme of demolition, were very active in proposing new models totally impracticable, because, to consist of perfect men, materials no where found to exist.* The French statesmen were equally blind to the probable consequences of the political as of the theological theories so prevalent towards the close of Louis XV.'s reign. Then was the time to have prevented their destructive effects by gradual and progressive melioration of church and state, which both demanded correction. The systematic impolicy of France in seeking commercial and maritime aggrandizement by provoking that nation that can always ruin her trade and crush her navy, tended very powerfully to give a practical operation to the spirit of liberty. The immense expense incurred in the seven years war, causing fiscal derangements, was the chief source of those contentions with the provincial parliaments that principally distinguished the last years of Louis XV. The actual opposition of these political bodies was perfectly justifiable, but called into action the prevailing theories, and paved the way for much more unrestrained efforts against the prince's power. Louis XVI., kind and liberal by nature, was disposed to moderate in its exercise the rigour of his absolute power, and to accommodate his government to the sentiments which, without comprehending their precise nature or extent, he in general saw become prevalent among his subjects. The first years of his reign promised popularity to the prince

Rousseau supposes man a perfectible being.

Co-operating political causes.

General impolicy and burdensome expense of the French wars against Britain.

* So early as the year 1772, Edmund Burke, in the theological scepticism and political hypothesis of the French writers, saw the probable overthrow of religion and government; and even in the house of commons mentioned his apprehension of the danger, and proposed to form an alliance among believers against (he said) those ministers of rebellious darkness who are endeavouring to shake all the works of God established in beauty and order.

With

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with increasing happiness to his people. Repetition, however, of the same preposterous policy which had cost France so much blood and treasure, not only drove him to an unprovoked war with England, but to a war in which he was to support revolting subjects against their sovereign in which every argument that he could adduce in favour of the Americans might be employed with much greater force to vindicate a revolt of his own subjects. The intercourse of the French with the defenders of a republican constitution very rapidly increased an antimonarchical spirit in a country predisposed for its reception. The enormous expences incurred in nourishing America, and endeavouring to injure Britain, plunged France into unexampled distress, and the aggression recoiled on the aggressor. An immense new debt was added to the old, the accumulation became intolerable. The multitude of the distinct loans which altogether composed this vast mass of debt, and the diversity of the conditions upon which, according to the genius of the respective projectors, they had been raised, the numberless appropriations of specific revenues to particular funds, and the frequent infractions of these to supply the immediate necessities of the state, occasioned such voluminous detailed accounts, such endless references[k], explanations, and deficiencies, with such eternal crowds of figures, that the whole presented a chaos of confusion, in which the financiers themselves seemed scarcely less bewildered than the public. The taxes, numerous as they were, and ruinous in the last degree to the people, were totally unequal to the supply of the current expences of the state and to the discharge of the interest or annuities arising on the various funds; new funds could not be raised, but the exigencies of the state must be supplied. No

Enormous expences and distressful consequences of the war to support the Americans.

Pecuniary embarrassments.

[k] See Annual Register, 1787, chap. vii.

effectual

effectual means were devised, but by withholding the annuities due to the public creditors to the amount of the deficiency. This measure involved numbers in distress and calamity, and caused loud clamours: in a situation so disastrous, projects and projectors of relief multiplied. The wealth of France was certainly very great, but the principal was in the private repositories of ministers, contractors, commissioners, stock-jobbers, farmers general, and the minions of the court.

Schemes of extrication,

VERGENNES died in 1786, and was succeeded by Monsieur de Calonne, who having in vain tried the experiment of new loans, the king proposed to assemble the states, but was dissuaded by the court and ministry. If the states were assembled, they might, instead of granting supplies, begin their deliberations with demanding a redress of grievances. Monsieur de Calonne wished to convene the Notables, an assembly deriving its name from the members being men of rank and respectability. The ministers had endeavoured to prevail on the nobility and clergy to contribute a share spontaneously of those immense sums which through their exemptions they were presumed to have accumulated. The same influence, it was also hoped, would be successfully used in prevailing on the great monied capitalists to bring forward part of their stores for the relief of the nation. A proclamation was accordingly issued the 16th of December for holding this assembly.[1]

Convention of the Notables.

IN an introductory speech Calonne contended that the public embarrassment arose from causes which were highly honourable to France and the present reign, and, notwithstanding the immediate

Calonne.

[1] It consisted of seven princes of the blood, nine dukes and peers of France, eight field-marshals, twenty-two nobles, eight counsellors of state, four masters of requests, eleven archbishops and bishops, thirty-seven judges of parliament, twelve deputies of the pays d'etat, the lieutenant civil, and twenty-five magistrates of different towns; in all, one hundred and forty-four. See Macfarlane's history of George III. vol. iii. p. 345.

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exigency, ultimately beneficial as well as glorious. A marine had been formed infinitely more powerful than any ever known in France; his majesty's fleets had sailed triumphant over the ocean, he had humbled the rival, and terminated an honourable war by a solid and permanent peace; devoting his attention to the public welfare, he had, since peace was established, invariably pursued extensive commerce abroad, and good administration at home. The minister had found the finances, when he was entrusted with their management, in a deplorable state; a vast unfunded debt, all annuities and interest greatly in arrear; all the coffers empty, the public stocks fallen to the lowest point, circulation interrupted, and all credit and confidence destroyed. He then showed the measures which he had pursued, and the happy effects they had produced (so far as his measures could reach) in remedying these complicated evils. He had, he said, re-established public credit upon a sound basis, had undertaken great and expensive works of the highest national importance; but notwithstanding all those favourable appearances of prosperity, there was an evil every year increasing in magnitude, this was the great annual deficiency of the public revenue, and its inadequacy to the national expence; to eradicate this evil was beyond the reach of ministers; additional taxes would oppress the people, whom the king wished of all things to relieve; anticipation on the revenue of subsequent years had already been practised to a ruinous extent; and the reduction of expence had been carried as far as was possible without weakening the state and government. In the reform of abuses, the king and his minister chiefly trusted to find a remedy for the evil. One of the most intolerable grievances which then prevailed, was the immunity of the most opulent classes from taxation; Calonne therefore proposed to equalise public burdens

He unfolds the dreadful state of the finances.

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burdens by rendering the taxes general; to accomplish this purpose, the nobility, clergy, and magistracies should be no longer exempted, but contribute their share to the exigencies of the state; the officers under the crown were to be assessed; and there should be a general impost on land, without excepting the possessions of any order or individual. Such a project, in whatsoever motives it originated, was certainly just in its principle, and efficient in its object, as a scheme of finance: as a measure of policy it was wise and equitable, since it proposed to restore to the commons so great a part of their usurped rights: but the minister did not show much judgment and prudence in the means which he chose for carrying his plan into execution. It was very improbable that the aristocratical corporations, to influence whom he had called the council of notables, would willingly recede from such lucrative immunities; indeed, the notables themselves consisted of members of the privileged orders, and might as a body be presumed unfavourable to a project tending so much to diminish their corporate advantages. They actually proved very inimical to the plan, which they represented as merely a new expedient for getting immense sums of money into the hands of government, to supply its extravagance and corruption; they refused to concur in the territorial impost, unless they were suffered to investigate the past expences and accounts, and future estimates, as thereby only they could know how far public money had been, or was likely to be, applied for the national good. The privileged orders raised a general outcry against the man who had proposed to abolish their immunities: they even persuaded the other classes, that the sole object of the minister was rapacity, for the purposes of embezzlement and peculation; that, so far from intending to lighten their burdens by his new system of impost, he designed to load them with fresh taxes, and thus the

He proposes an equalisation of public burdens.

He incenses the privileged orders.

Outcry against the minister,

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aristocrates excited the hatred of the people against the minister, whose plan, if adopted and fairly executed, would have rendered to the people themselves so essential a service. Moreover, the queen was a great enemy to the minister because he attacked one of her favourites. The mild and compliant Louis readily imbibed the prevailing sentiment, and withdrew his confidence and regard from a man whom he saw distrusted and hated by so many others. Calonne, fearing a judicial prosecution while the minds of all ranks were so biassed against him, retired into England.[m] Meanwhile monsieur de Brienne[n], archbishop of Thoulouse, a leading member of the notables, was appointed prime minister, and without attempting the radical reform which the exigency required, he proposed and executed various partial improvements in the collection of taxes, and the management of the public money. It was manifest that a change so confined in principle and operation could not extricate the country from its present evils. By the new minister the assembly of notables was dissolved[o], and he thought himself obliged to have recourse to the usual mode of raising money by edicts. Among the measures was a double poll-tax, and a heavy stamp-duty. The parliament of Paris remonstrated against the first subsidy, in terms very unlike the former language of their assemblies, even when they opposed the will of the king. Before they should concur in raising money, they required to be informed of the real state of the finances, and the purposes to which the new imposts were to be applied; and they particularly objected to the stamp-duty; their requisition not having been admitted,

Disgraced: he retires into banishment.

Brienne, minister.

Trifling and inefficient reform.

Contests with the parliament of Paris.

[m] This minister has been charged with having amassed immense riches by plundering the public. He certainly lived in London, for several years, in magnificent splendor; but what his funds were, or how acquired, was never ascertained.

[n] Bouillé on the French Revolution, p. 50.

[o] In the opinion of Bouillé, very unwisely, p. 51.

they

they refused to enregister the edict. The king finding them inflexible to persuasion, held a bed of justice, to compel them to registration. This procedure, hateful in the reign of Louis XV. was infinitely more odious at present, when the spirit of liberty was so much stronger and more generally diffused. The edict having been forcibly registered, the parliament PROTESTED, that not having been obtained, by their approbation and consent, IT SHOULD NOT BE VALID; and that whoever attempted to put it in execution should be doomed to the gallies as a traitor: This resolute opposition was imitated by all the other parliaments. Matters now appeared to draw to a crisis; the alternative of the crown seemed to be, either to proceed to coercion, or to relinquish for ever the long-usurped power of raising money by its own authority. On the other hand, the judicative bodies were determined to show that they would not, without resistance, any longer permit an arbitrary invasion of property, however supported by precedent. On the 24th of July the parliament of Paris published a remonstrance [p], highly celebrated for a forcible reasoning, a bold and animated eloquence, which clearly demonstrated and strongly impressed awful truths. After a happy peace that had lasted five years, they, from the revenue before possessed by the crown, had trusted that no fresh imposts would have been proposed; great then was their surprise at the requisition of an additional tax so extensive, and generally odious. Ministers had never approached the throne with a voice of truth, but had disguised from the king the actual state of his dominions, and the sentiments of his subjects. The council of the notables had been the occasion of discovering to the public the dreadful situation of affairs, and the progressive steps of error, corruption, and vice, by

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Attempts of the crown to overawe the refractory, unsuccessful.

Remonstrance of the parliament of Paris.

[p] See remonstrance, State Papers, July 24th, 1787.

which

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which courtiers had reduced France to such a condition. Taxes were the contributions of citizens for their own private security, and the public safety; if they exceeded those purposes, they were inconsistent with justice and the good of the people, the sole objects of legitimate government. Neither parliaments, nor any other authority but the whole nation assembled, could sanction a new impost. The nation only, being convened and instructed in the true state of the finances, could extirpate the abuses that actually existed, and offer resources to obviate such evils in future. If this remonstrance be considered in relation to the rights of a free people, and to the actual abuses under the French government; it was firm, yet perfectly temperate and respectful. Addressed, however, to a monarch who had inherited arbitrary power, it appeared a presumptuous encroachment. It was extremely natural for Louis to think himself rightfully entitled to the sway of his ancestors; to overlook the injustice in which that dominion was founded, and the great change of popular sentiment from the time even of his last predecessor. Like Charles I. he presumed a divine right to what his ancestors and he had possessed only by human sufferance; and, like Charles I. he did not discern that the opinions and sentiments which had permitted thraldom, no longer existed among his subjects. Louis, however, had a much more formidable force than Charles, in which he conceived he might repose secure confidence. He therefore determined on coercion; collected great bodies of troops round the metropolis; and sent parties of soldiers to the house of every individual member of the parliament of Paris, to carry him in banishment to Troyes, about seventy miles from the capital, and not to suffer him to write or speak to any person of his own family before his departure. These orders were executed at the same instant, on the 18th of August,

August, and by force the judicial body was prevented from proceeding in its official business. In the following month the president was dispatched by the exiles to Versailles, to represent to his majesty the pernicious effects of the compulsory measures which he was then pursuing. After several audiences, instead of adhering to the hereditary maxims of arbitrary power, the king yielded to the dictates of his individual benignity and patriotism; he consented to abandon the obnoxious attacks, and to suffer parliament to resume its functions. Meanwhile the flame of liberty was bursting forth in various parts of the kingdom.[q] Other parliaments not only emulated, but surpassed the generous boldness of Paris, and with the right of property asserted the claims of personal security. The parliament of Grenoble declared *lettres de cachet*, or arbitrary imprisonment, to be totally unconstitutional; and pronounced a decree, rendering it capital for any person, under ANY authority, to attempt such an act within that province. In all the populous towns, where there was the most ready and extensive interchange of opinion and sentiment; the conduct of government, once so sacred in France, was openly discussed, and most severely reprobated, both in discourse and publications.[r] The king, in November, appeared to have changed his disposition and intentions: meeting the parliament of Paris, he said he had come to hear their opinions; but before they delivered them; to signify his own.[s] They ought to confine themselves to the functions entrusted by the king to their predecessors: the expediency of calling public assemblies was a measure of which he was the sole judge. He was about to issue an edict, creating for five successive years a loan that would require no new impost. Permission being given for every

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[q] Annual Register, 1787, chap. vii. *passim*.
[r] Bertrand de Moleville, introduction
[s] State Papers, Nov. 19, 1787.

member

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member to speak without restraint, a warm debate on the registration of the edict ensued in the presence of the king; but at last his majesty, suddenly rising, commanded the decree to be registered without delay. The duke of Orleans, first prince of the blood after the king's brothers, warmly opposed this order, as a direct infringement of parliamentary right; and protested against all the acts of the day, as thereby rendered void. His majesty, astonished at a proceeding so new to an absolute prince, repeated his order, and quitted the assembly.

Banishment of the active oppositionists.

The next day he banished the duke and two of his most active supporters. The parliament, far from tamely submitting to this act of power, published a very strong address, which justified the exiled members, avowed the highest approbation of their conduct, and represented the dangerous consequences of such a restriction on the necessary freedom of speech. The king answered, that he had strong reasons for the banishment of those members; with this assurance parliament ought to rest satisfied; the more goodness he was disposed to show to his parliaments, the more firmly he would approve himself if he saw his goodness abused.

Bold tone of parliament, and forcible address.

Parliament replied in the bold tone of men determined to assert their freedom: "your parliament does not *solicit* favour, it DEMANDS justice. No man ought to be condemned without a fair trial: arbitrary banishments, arrests, or imprisonments, constitute no part of the legal prerogative of the French crown. It is in the name of those laws which preserve the empire, in the name of that liberty of which we are the respectful interpreters and lawful mediators, in the name of your authority, of which we are the first and most confidential ministers, that we dare demand either the trial or the release of the duke of Orleans and the exiled magistrates." This attack on a prerogative so long exercised by the court, and essential to the maintenance of arbitrary monarchy,

narchy, was resisted by the king; and he told them, that what they demanded of his justice depended on his will. This principle that would subject the freedom and happiness of millions to the will of an individual, though the foundation of French absolute monarchy, the enlightened parliament totally condemned; they refused to purchase justice by concession; declared parliament would never cease to demand the impeachment or liberty of the persons in question, and would employ the same zeal and perseverance to ensure to every Frenchman the personal security promised by the laws, and due by the principles of the constitution. This patriotic assembly supported the claim in question, and urged new assertions, not for their own body alone, but for the whole nation. They published a remonstrance [t], declaring that no taxes could be granted but by the consent of the people; they extended the same doctrine to the whole body of legislative power, insisting that no man ought to be imprisoned, dispossessed of his property or liberty, outlawed or banished, or in any way hurt or injured, unless through his own act, his representatives, or the law of the land. [u] The [x] parliament

The parliament of Paris asserts the rights of a free people.

[t] State Papers, Nov. 23d. 1787.

[u] See this doctrine stated by Hume in his remarks on the great charter of England, Hist. vol. ii. p. 88.

[x] The provincial parliaments of France were originally courts of justice, possessing no share in the legislation, either as an order or as representatives of the people. From the time of cardinal Richelieu, the legislative as well as the executive authority was vested entirely in the crown. The practice of employing the parliaments to enregister the king's edicts, was never intended to convey any authority or force through these bodies; they were considered merely as notaries, to record and authenticate their existence, and thereby as well to promulgate them, as to prevent any doubts being entertained by the public of their reality. The parliament, however, as their popularity and power increased, and times and circumstances proved favourable to the design, assumed a right of judging whether these edicts were injurious to the public. If they determined them to be hurtful, they by a legal fiction pretended that being contrary to the welfare of the people, and contrary to the king's wisdom, justice, or clemency, they did not believe them to be the king's real acts, but considered them as an imposition practised by his ministers; and on this ground they presented memorials or remonstrances to the king, placing in the strongest colours they could all the evil consequences which they presumed would attend their being passed into laws. See Annual Register, 1789.

of

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of Paris vindicated those fundamental rights, which no time, nor precedent, nor statute, nor positive institution can abolish, which men always may reclaim when they will. They endeavoured from history and authority to prove this popular consent to have been the foundation of laws in former times, before the subversion of the constitution under the house of Bourbon. The precedents which they quoted did not apply to the present situation, and indeed obscured instead of illustrating their claims. But as neither the justice nor expediency of the doctrine rested upon former usage or authority, the irrelevancy of their citations affected neither the truth of their positions, nor the wisdom of their conduct.

Spirit of boundless innovation.

THE spirit of liberty and reform, operating on the ingenious and volatile character of Frenchmen, and tinctured by the peculiar doctrines of late political philosophers, produced a disposition to innovation. Even at this period many reformers assumed a position, that every existing establishment was bad, and therefore that melioration consisted in a total change. The court imputed to parliaments the prevailing spirit, which these bodies rather expressed than incited; and, confounding the organs with the cause, formed a project for annulling the authority which was recently assumed by these bodies. Professing to gratify the popular passion for reform, ministers proposed a general amendment in the codes both of civil and criminal justice. For this purpose, a tribunal was to be instituted, endowed with such powers as would carry back the parliaments to the original principles of their institution, and reduce them to the condition of mere courts of justice.[y] The members of this body were all to be chosen by the king[z]: their number, and every circumstance relative

[y] Bouillé, 54.

[z] They were to have consisted of princes of the blood; of peers of the realm; of great officers of state; of marshals of France; of governors of provinces; of knights

relative to their meeting, was to depend on the royal will. Profound secrecy was observed in conducting this project: the edicts were privately printed at the royal press, and intended to be presented, on the same day to all the parliaments in France, and the registration was to be enforced by soldiers. The scheme, however, being discovered before it was ripe for execution, by M. d'Epresmenil, was by him communicated to the parliament of Paris, of which he was a member. This body, meeting on the 3d of May, 1788, issued a declaration, stating a report of a conspiracy, by the court, against the authority of parliaments, the interests and liberties of the nation. Detailing the alleged rights of parliaments, and the purposes both of their general bestowal and recent exercise, they declared their resolution of surrendering their privileges, not to ministers, or any new courts established by their influence, but to the king himself, and the states general. Though Louis had, as an act of grace, liberated Orleans and the magistrates, he still determined to support the principle of arbitrary imprisonment. Agreeably to this resolution, he ordered M. D'Epresmenil, and M. De Monsambert, two of the most active members of the parliament, to be arrested in their houses. Though these patriots evaded immediate caption, by concealing themselves from the soldiers, they disdained to abstain from their duty in parliament. That body, informed of the attempt, sent a deputation to remonstrate with the king; but the delegates were not admitted. A regiment of guards surrounded the court of parliament; its commander entering the assembly, demanded the two magistrates whom the king had ordered to be arrested: a profound silence

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knights of different orders; of members of council; and of a deputation of one member from each parliament of the kingdom, and two from the chamber of accounts and supply. Annual Register, 1789, c. i.

for

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for some time ensued; at last, the president rising, with the acclamations of the whole body, replied, every member here, is a D'Epresmenil and a Monsambert.[a] These magistrates, however, surrendered themselves, and were led off to prison amidst the loud execrations of the people. The king, on the 8th of May, held a bed of justice to introduce the intended reforms: he inveighed against the undutiful behaviour of parliament, and declared his determination to suppress such excesses, in a few of the magistrates; yet in general he preferred prevention to penal animadversion; he then announced the heads of the new constitution which his chancellor fully detailed.[b] Parliament the following day entered against these proceedings, a protest, repeating the substance of their former remonstrances, and declaring individually and aggregately that they would accept of no employment under the projected establishment. This protestation was seconded by a great body of the members; and so generally was the new spirit now disseminated, that even many of the clergy declared concurrence in their sentiments and resolution. Thus encouraged, parliament published a still stronger memorial than any which they had before issued; peremptorily declaring their inflexible determination to persevere in their past measures. Through all the kingdom, public bodies, spontaneous associations, and private individuals, appeared agitated by the same spirit. The court, on the other hand, proceeded to coërcive measures; the governor of Paris entering the parliament-house, took possession of all the papers and archives; having locked the doors, and stamped them with the king's seal, he carried away the keys. All the other parliaments in the kingdom were suspended from their functions, and for-

Arbitrary suspension of the parliaments.

[a] Annual Register, 1789, chap. i. Mackintosh's Vindiciæ Gallicæ.
[b] State Papers, May 8th.

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bidden under the severest penalties to hold any meetings. In this crisis, the question now evidently lay between the establishment of liberty, or of complete despotism.[c] Brienne was by no means capable of conducting affairs in so difficult a situation; he possessed neither the sagacity which could have discovered the force of a general spirit diffused through a people of such boldness and energy, nor the wisdom which, to a certain extent, would have gratified the national desire, in order to prevent the national violence; and moderated the regal power to preserve its essential and useful prerogative. He was no less deficient in that boldness of design, and vigour of execution, which only could have overborne the determination of the people, and crushed their rights. The ready and willing tool of arbitrary power in its usual and established exercise, he possessed neither invention nor courage to be its counsellor or champion in untried dangers. The conduct of government was a motley mixture of outrage and irresolution, violence and feebleness: for a short time the court persisted in coërcive efforts, both in Paris and other provinces; and in Dauphiny, Languedoc and Britanny, the parliaments were exiled, but the rage of the people broke out in riots, which produced disorder and bloodshed. In some instances it appeared, that the soldiers being commanded to quell the disturbances, manifested an extreme unwillingness to act against their countrymen. The king was at this time in the greatest pecuniary distress, which he saw the people would not voluntarily relieve; nothing, he perceived, short of military execution, would enforce the obnoxious edicts. Destitute of money, he lost a great part of the influence which through donative he had possessed; many of the nobility, from the extravagance of their ancestors, their own, or

1789. National ferment.

Unfitness of Brienne for his office.

Distressed situation of the king.

[c] Bouillé, *passim*.

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both, were mere dependants on the bounty of the crown; and in the poverty of the king they saw themselves precluded from the usual resource of titled insignificance and beggary; accustomed to luxury and splendor, and the eleemosynary fountain of their prodigality and ostentation no longer flowing, they from a special cause became infected with the general discontent; poor lords, who had subsisted by the royal dole, forsook the king when he had no dole to bestow.[d] The household of the monarch, extremely magnificent and expensive, had supported vast numbers of officers and attendants; in the king's distresses four hundred of these were necessarily dismissed; many of them, no longer maintained in idleness and pomp, turned against the hand which had given them food while it had food to give, and from the most despicable and unworthy motives added to the number of those who opposed the king's government from generous and patriotic principles. The discontents rising from political causes were enhanced by a physical calamity; a dreadful hurricane of wind, rain, hail, thunder, and lightning, on the 13th of July, assailing the land, destroyed the fruits and corn. Want and misery were soon felt through the kingdom; and the capital itself was apprehensive of a famine. The dearness of provisions induced or compelled many families to dismiss their servants, and thus increased the number of the idle, distressed, and dissatisfied. To aggravate the danger which menaced the court from so many concurring causes, the wild theories of sophistical projectors, equally inimical to religion as to regular government, to beneficial liberty as to absolute monarchy, were fast gaining ground. In the latter end of 1788, the opponents of the king consisted of two great classes: — first, the champions of rational liberty,

[d] Annual Register, 1789.

determined

determined not only to prevent future encroachments, but to correct past usurpations; to change the government from an absolute to a limited monarchy; to render its object the general happiness, instead of the pleasure of individuals, its rule the national voice, instead of the monarch's will. The other class consisted of those who, not contented with an alteration of measures, sought an utter subversion of the establishment, and promoted doctrines and schemes, which would destroy all government: between these two extremes there were various gradations, from the supporters of limited monarchy to the levellers of all ranks and orders. The principal actors were at this time chiefly of the former division, or at least more nearly allied to it than to the latter; but subordinate agents, especially many of the literary men employed as efficacious instruments by the leaders, were closely connected with the votaries of boundless revolution. Many of the writers, in combating absolute power to assist parliaments and vindicate the rights of the people, attacked all existing forms and establishments, and loosened the great cements of society. [e]

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The minister seeing his sovereign in such calamitous circumstances, was more mindful of his own safety, than gratitude to his master; he resigned his office, and sought refuge in Italy. Louis finding his own distresses, and those of his kingdom, multiplying, and that the arbitrary measures which were suggested by his ministers were producing effects so different from their predictions, and his wishes, resolved to adopt a new plan, more consistent with his own benignant character. To gratify the nation, and procure a counsellor likely to relieve the country and himself, he determined to recall the celebrated Mr. Neckar. From this gentleman, so universally popular, and, indeed, the idol

He resolves to recall Mr. Neckar,

[e] Bertrand de Moleville on the French Revolution, v. i. c. 1.

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of their adoration, the warm fancies of Frenchmen expected impossibilities. They seemed to have conceived that he possessed a kind of magical power, which could pay off an immense public debt without money, and supply twenty-five millions of people with corn and bread. But Neckar by no means possessed those extraordinary talents which were once imputed to him by the grateful subjects of Louis, and by that monarch himself. Strict morals and integrity even his adversaries [f] ascribed to this celebrated economist; but the impartial philosopher [g] readily discovered that he was a mere man of detail; a skilful and upright steward, but not a profound statesman. "Neckar (says Bouillé) viewed France with the eyes of a citizen of Geneva." Native of a republic, he was warmly attached to the rights and interests of the people; of plebeian extraction, he too little regarded the distinctions of rank and of birth, and estimated them by the abstract principles of equality, instead of the actual institutions of an established government in a great and powerful nation: his sentiments and habits of thinking were inimical to the privileged orders. Neckar was, individually, a man of immense riches; during a considerable part of his life, he had been chiefly conversant with monied capitalists, and naturally attributed more than its due share of importance to the distinction of wealth: hence, in every regulation which he should desire to frame, farmers of the revenue, contractors, bankers, and merchants, were likely to be more considered than the clergy or nobility: and from these various causes Neckar was chiefly attached to the third estate. With such notions and predilections he came to the administration of France, at a season which required a statesman and lawgiver that could survey the whole circumstances and interests of the

[f] Bouillé, page 70. [g] Adam Smith.

empire

empire without leaning either to clergy or laity, nobility or plebeians, to riches or to birth; and would provide impartially and effectually for the welfare of the whole.

On Mr. Neckar's appointment, the chief persons of Brienne's party were dismissed from office. The parliament of Paris was restored to its functions, met in the middle of September, and caused all the king's late decrees, which they represented as unconstitutional, to be publicly burnt. Mr. Neckar found the finances in so disordered a condition, that he advised a convocation of the States General as the only effectual measure for relief. He proposed, however, as a preliminary, to summon a new convocation of notables, who should deliver their opinion concerning the composition of the States General, the qualifications of the electors, and of the elected; the mode of election, the proportion of delegates to the wealth and populousness of the several districts; also, the amount and relation of members to be sent by the different orders, and the instructions which they were to receive from their constituents; and the 1st of May, 1789, was the day appointed for the meeting of the States General.

who counsels the convocation of the States General.

Two great questions existed between the three orders, the nobles, the clergy, and the commons; first, whether all the deputies should meet in one assembly, wherein the concentrated power of the States General should reside; or whether they should be divided as they had been at the last meeting in 1614, into three chambers, through which a resolution must be carried (at least two of them) before it became the acknowledged act of the States.[h] Secondly, whether the number of deputies from each of the orders should be three

Question concerning the consolidation of the orders,

[h] Voting *by heads* was the term applied to the first of these alternatives, and voting *by orders* to the second.

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hundred, as in 1614, or the clergy and nobles should retain their former numbers, and the commons send six hundred, so as to equal the amount of the other two estates: this was called the double representation of the people. These two questions agitated the public with great violence: if they voted by orders, a double representation would be of no effect, as the two estates could out-vote the three; therefore, the double representation was proposed on the supposition that they were to vote by numbers. The arguments for three assemblies were founded on ancient usage; for one, upon justice and expediency. By the supporters of the last it was contended, that unless there was but one assembly the power of the commons would really be nugatory. The clergy and nobles would coalesce together to defend their immunities against the commons, who, in their own, maintained the general interests of the people. If their numbers were not equal to those of the other two orders, they could effect no purpose of important improvement. The aristocratical estates prevailing among the notables, that council voted for separate chambers. In their opinion concurred the parliament of Paris, which, though desirous of repressing the power of the crown, was inimical to the exaltion of the commons. Mr. Neckar inclined to the third estate, but at the same time professed a desire to preserve the necessary and useful prerogatives of the crown; but the means were not wisely adapted to the end. Neckar reasoned like an accountant rather than a statesman, and treated a question for constituting the legislation of a mighty nation, as if he had been summing up the items of a day-book in order to make an entry into a ledger: he thought that by equalizing the *numbers* of the commons and the two privileged orders, the one would

and the double representation.

would balance the other; the States General, like the parliament of England, would consist of two great branches of lawgivers, which, together with the king, might produce mutual support and reciprocal controul; therefore he promoted the double representation. But though there would be thus an *arithmetical* equality between the two first orders and the third, perfectly satisfactory to an auditor of accounts, there was by no means that POLITICAL equality which would have satisfied a wise lawgiver, who proposed to establish an effectual balance in a constitution. If Neckar had discerned the actual state and party, he would have found that the partizans of the privileged orders among the commons were very few, that the partizans of the commons among the privileged orders were very many [i], and therefore, that if they were equal in number, the commons would engross the power which he proposed to be separated. Intending that the aristocracy and democracy should be a mutual equipoise, Mr. Neckar, to whose opinion the king implicitly resigned himself, in no small degree contributed to the destruction of the one and predominancy of the other. The minister entirely neglected the question concerning the consolidation of the orders; an omission which prevented a corrective of the power which the commons were to obtain by the double representation. The parliament of Paris found they had lost their popularity by taking the side of the other privileged orders, and that they might regain the favour of the commons, published a decree which vindicated as the rights of a Frenchman, all the leading objects that have been attained, or indeed sought, by the best and most admired constitutions. The rights claimed, nearly the same as those

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[i] See Annual Register, 1789.

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secured to Englishmen, were such as must have contented all who understood both the extent and bounds of useful liberty. The chief heads of the decree were, that no assembly could be considered as national, unless it ascertained the following points in favour of the people: the periodical returns of the States General; no subsidy to be allowed, unless granted by the States; no law to be executed by the courts of justice, unless ratified by the States; the suppression of all taxes which marked the exemption of certain orders; equalization of imposts; the responsibility of ministers; the right of the States General to bring accusations before the courts of justice for crimes; the abolition of arbitrary imprisonment, by bringing before the proper judges every man who was detained; and confirming the lawful freedom of the press. These claims were far from answering the ideas of liberty now spread through France. The decree was regarded with indifference, and the parliament henceforward dwindled into insignificance. The year 1789 began with very great dissensions between the orders. The nobility and clergy, which, in 1787, had refused to part with their immunities, now expressed their willingness to take an equal share of the public burdens. The commons, far from being satisfied with this submission, proposed to overthrow all privileges whatsoever; to reject every claim founded on ancient usage, or on compact; to make general equality the standard of private or public right. The writers of the time employed their separate and joint ingenuity in attacking the rank and titles of the nobles, and the tenure by which many of them held their estates; and French liberty, in the beginning of 1789, was mingled with principles subversive of rank and of property. Until the meeting of the States, the question concerning the amalgamation of the orders agitated the nobles and commons, while

The commons of France already desire a licence too great for useful liberty.

while the clergy appeared undecided, and ready to join the party which should prevail. It had been customary in France, in former times, when the States General met, for the orders in each district to deliver instructions to their respective delegates. This practice being now revived, the directions given to the deputies of the nobles, and to the deputies of the commons, by their respective constituents, very fully manifested the diversity of the spirit which actuated the three bodies. The instructions of the nobility enjoined their representatives to urge a reform of the constitution; to strengthen the securities for property, liberty, and life; and to surrender their pecuniary exemptions, but not resign their feudal rights, nor to consent to a consolidation of the orders. The commons, in their mandates to their commissioners, instructed them to insist on the abolition of all distinctions, the abandonment of feudal rights, and the resolution of the different states into one mass. The injunctions of the nobility tended, if followed, to establish a moderate and limited government, securing civil rights to all classes of subjects, but preserving a distinction of orders and a subordination of ranks. The injunctions of the commons, previous to their first assembly, tended to overturn the other states under the weight of a democracy.[k]

Instructions from constituents to delegates.

On the 1st of May 1789, after a cessation of one hundred and seventy-five years, the States General of France met for the first time. The parties which had prevailed throughout the kingdom appeared in the States General, and ranged themselves into three great divisions. The first was the aristocratic party, determined to support the ancient form and mode of procedure, by a se-

Meeting of the states.

[k] Mr. Lally Tolendal, in exhibiting the different views of the parties of this time, observes, the commons wished to conquer, the nobles wished to preserve what they already possessed; the clergy waited to see which side would be victorious, in order to join the conquerors.

paration

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paration of the states into three chambers. This class was considerable from the rank, talents, and situation of its members. The second division was that of the moderate party; its members were, on the one hand, averse to assemblies of three separate orders, as tending to throw the legislative power too much into the hands of the privileged states, and, instead of an unlimited monarchy, to establish an uncontrouled aristocracy; on the other, they were inimical to the confusion of the orders, as tending, instead of reforming, to subvert the government. These were desirous of forming the nobles and clergy into one house, upon a principle of reciprocal controul, analogous to the British constitution. The third division was the great and formidable democratic party, seeking and tending to overbear all ranks and distinctions. In this class were to be numbered some of the most conspicuous men of the other orders. The extraordinary abilities of Mirabeau were employed against that estate to which he himself belonged. The first prince of the blood was active in promoting factions tending to subvert the monarchy from which he derived his elevated rank and immense possessions.[1] Against the clergy appeared the bishop of Autun, carrying with him a great body of his brethren, and prepared to join the most violent commons in their democratic excesses. The abbe Sieyes, an eminent disciple of the new philosophy, penetrating, crafty, and versatile, brought all his ability and address to support the faction which his discernment easily perceived about to be paramount. The literary men, a great and powerful class, in circumstances

[1] The yearly income of the Duke of Orleans was estimated at half a million sterling. A considerable part of this revenue was employed in acquiring popularity, and forming, from the idle and profligate rabble through the provinces, but especially in the city of Paris, a numerous body of retainers, ready to undertake any service, however desperate, at his instance. If his views, as has been often asserted, were directed to the highest pinnacle of ambition, by a fatality which often accompanies wickedness, the measures, which he pursued for the destruction of another, destroyed himself.

that

that so much depended on public opinion, ranged themselves under the standard of the commons, pursuing measures so inimical to that tranquillity and prosperity which best nourish the pursuits of literature. The monied capitalists, proud of their wealth, and envious of the rank which their opulence could not attain, were foremost in instigating measures tending to the destruction of that property which only could prevent them from insignificance. Besides these classes, the third division included numbers of profligate spendthrifts, abounding in France, as in all luxurious countries, who wished for a change by which they hoped to be better, and knew they could not be worse. CHAP. XLIII. 1789.

Speech of the king.

THE states being met, his majesty, in a speech from the throne, mentioned his reasons for convoking the assembly; he noticed the restless spirit of innovation, and the general discontent which prevailed among his people. A great object of the states, he trusted, would be to remove those evils; and they would manifest in their proceedings that loyalty and attachment to the monarchy from which France derived such glory and benefit. The chancellor spoke of the advantages which accompanied a limited government, equally distant from despotism and anarchy. Mr. Neckar then rising, excited in the audience the highest expectation. From him all parties trusted for the most full and accurate information concerning every important department of public affairs; strong practical reasoning, which would demonstrate what was wise and right to be done at such a crisis; with manly eloquence to inculcate the necessity of correspondent conduct; but all were totally disappointed: his speech was loose and declamatory, abounding in general maxims of morality and politics, which were obviously true, but in no way illustrated the momentous subjects of deliberation; and sentimental effusions, that asserted the wishes of the speaker

Of Neckar.

for

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for the happiness of France, without explaining any means for its attainment. On the great subject of consolidation he said nothing decisive; he merely expressed a desire that the matter might be accommodated. Appointed by his sovereign to address the national representatives, who were assembled to deliberate on great public difficulties, he neither stated facts, nor proposed means leading to extrication; his harangue was totally inadequate to the office which he was chosen to discharge. The ministry were no less feeble and indecisive in their conduct than their language. The king at this time possessed all the legal authority of the kingdom; and though the states were met, they were not yet constituted, as the writs of election had not been examined. He, by his established authority, might have instituted concerning their sessions any regulations which should be conformable to ancient precedent and usage; and to have refused compliance with his directions would have been rebellion. Notwithstanding his possession of this power, his ministers most impolitically neglected the exercise of it to prevent the confusion of the orders, and thereby suffered the states to become a democratical assembly. The verification of their powers[m] afforded the first occasion to the commons of insisting that they should meet in one chamber. Encouraged by their own strength, and the backwardness of the ministers, they very boldly asserted, that unless the writs were verified in their presence, they could not admit their holders to a seat in the assembly, and that both nobles and clergy would be illegal meetings. The clergy

Disunion and indeci-

[m] Each member was obliged, before the commencement of public business, to present his writ of election upon the table of the chamber to which he belonged. Commissaries were then appointed by each order to examine the authenticity of all the writs immediately belonging to itself; and until this business was finished, which usually took up several days, the States General were destitute of all legal authority whatsoever. The sanction of these commissaries to the authenticity of the writs, afforded what was called the *verification of powers*.

wavered;

wavered; many of the nobility were firm in maintaining the rights of a separate verification, but there were great disssensions in that body. The commons, on the other hand, were united. Mr. Neckar proposed conciliatory measures, which, from their indecisiveness, satisfied neither party. The nobles remaining inflexible, the commons, by a still bolder stretch of their power and influence, declared that they would constitute themselves into an active assembly, and proceed to legislative business. Many of the clergy, seeing the commons prevalent, flocked to their hall, and were most joyfully received. The commons executed the bold design which they had formed, and constituted themselves into a meeting which they denominated the NATIONAL ASSEMBLY. This body so formed by its own act, rapidly advanced in the assumption of power. On the 17th of June they published a decree, intimating that they possessed the sovereign authority, and exercised the same by a very popular act, declaring all existing taxes to be [a] illegal. The king was alarmed at proceedings which changed the constitution, and tended speedily to draw the supreme authority into the democratic vortex; and began to be dissatisfied with his ministers, to whose irresolution and inaction he now imputed the progress of ambitious violence. The princes and other votaries of the old government, exhorted him to vigorous measures [b]; they advised him to hold a royal session in the hall of the States General, which by assembling would suspend the meeting of that body. The king agreed to follow the advice, and on the 20th of June he issued a proclamation appointing the 22d for that purpose. The majority of the clergy having now agreed to join the commons, the members of the third estate repaired to the hall. The

Division of the nobles and clergy.

The commons declare themselves a national assembly.

[a] Bertrand, vol. i. 69.

[b] Bertrand, chap. ii.

king

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king having appointed the same day for the royal session, the guards were ordered to keep that apartment clear until the arrival of his majesty. As the members of the assembly came to the door, they were refused admittance by the soldiers; the commons, from so violent an act, apprehending an immediate dissolution, retired to an old tennis-court, where they bound themselves by a solemn oath never to part until the constitution was completed. The majority of the clergy now joined the commons, and met them in St. Louis's church, on the 23d. The royal session being opened, his majesty proposed the outlines of a new constitution: he engaged to establish no fresh tax, nor to prolong an old impost beyond the term assigned by the laws, without the consent of the representatives of the nation; he renounced the right of borrowing money, unless with the approbation of the states; there should be an end of pecuniary exemptions; and *lettres de cachet* should cease, with some modifications. He condemned the late decree of the commons, which assumed, by their own sole act, the whole legislative power of the kingdom; and concluded that none of the laws established in the present States General could ever be altered, but by the free consent of future States General, and that they should be considered as equally sacred with all other national properties. On the other hand, he declared that all tithes and feudal rents should be accounted property, and therefore sacred; and that the states should be assembled in three chamber instead of one. The manner of the address by no means suited the conciliatory professions, nor indeed the substance of the proposition. It frequently introduced the king's will as the foundation of grants which in a government intended to be free were RIGHTS, not *favours*. In themselves, however, the propositions were such as a few years before, political sagacity could have not

conceived that a king of France would offer to his subjects. His majesty commanded them to separate, and to meet the next day in the halls of their respective orders. Equitable as the plan was in itself, it required little penetration to perceive, that it would by no means meet the ideas of the commons; that the magisterial expressions would render it still more unpalatable, and were therefore extremely unwise. The commons listened in haughty silence, while the plan was reading; and as soon as the king departed, absolutely refused to break up their session. The king's attendants having reminded them of his majesty's order, the president answered, THE NATION ASSEMBLED HAS NO ORDERS TO RECEIVE. [p] They passed a resolution declaring the adherence of the assembly to its former decree; and another pronouncing the persons of the deputies sacred and inviolable. The populace at Versailles became violent in behalf of the commons. At Paris the ferment was still more outrageous [q], and increased in proportion to the attempts of either the nobles or the court, to oppose or controul the pretensions of the third estate. The commons now found themselves so strong in the public support, that they affected to treat the king's system and declaration as too insignificant to merit consideration or answer. On the 24th of June, the

Popular violence.

[p] Mirabeau, who through some acts and some suspicions had nearly lost his popularity, had the fortune upon this occasion to recover it with increase, by the impetuosity with which he told the king's attendants, that nothing but the points of bayonets should force them out of their chamber.

[q] No class of rioters was more active in the French capital than the (poissardes) fish-women; who, in addition to the violence of their sisters in our own metropolis, possessed all the Gallic vivacity. Far exceeding the Billingsgate fair, instead of confining themselves to volubility of invective, from time immemorial they had acted a distinguished part in Parisian mobs, and were noted for their ferocious actions. On so great an occasion they were not slow in displaying their zeal and their talents. The sex likewise afforded another class of [illegible], more insinuating, less savage in appearance, but not less effective. These were the courtezans, whose numbers were immense in that [illegible] city. One of the chief scenes of disorder and enormity was the garden of the Duke of Orleans, whither the mob daily resorted, where hired orators inflamed them to every act of atrocious violence.

Count

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Firmness in the nobles.

Count de Clermont moved, that the nobles should unite with the commons, and was ably joined by Monsieur de Lally Tolendal; but the majority of nobles, would not bend to a proposal which the natural propossession of birth, rank, and custom, taught them to deem humiliating. Many of that body, however, were either connected with the popular party, or convinced that inflexibility would answer no purpose; and therefore joined the assembly. The people became hourly more violent against the majority of the nobles, whom they deemed refractory; outrage and bloodshed were expected. The members of this self-created assembly had far exceeded the instructions of their constituents; in assuming the legislative power, they were not the representatives of the people; they were a strong and numerous faction, that usurped the office of lawgivers by force; by force only could usurpation have been opposed. Concession never did nor can avert the encroachments of determined ambition. This was the language which the princes of the blood[r], and all the firmest friends of the monarchy held; it was indeed not the language of choice, but necessity. From the attempt of the popular faction to seize the direction of the empire, the simple question with the votaries of monarchy was, Shall we defend ourselves or be overwhelmed? There was no alternative. The king was uniformly impelled by humanity, and in the mildness of his disposition, seeking the good of his people, he deviated from that firmness by which only their welfare could have been effectually secured. To avert the dangers which he conceived to impend over the unyielding nobles, he entreated that order to give up their judgment and determination to the wishes of the governing faction. On the 27th of June he sent the following

The king exhorts them to yield.

[r] See Bertrand.

message

message to the nobles, by their president the Duke of Luxemburgh: "From the fidelity and affection of the order of which you are president, I expect its union with the other two. I have reflected upon it, and am determined to make every sacrifice, *rather than that a single man should perish on my account.* Tell the order of the nobility, therefore, that I entreat them to join the other two estates; and if this be not enough, I command them to do it as their king — it is my will. If there be one of its members who believes himself bound by his instructions, his oath, or his honour, to remain in the chamber, let me know: I will go and sit by him, and die with him, if it be necessary!" A long and violent debate took place, in which the Duke of Luxemburgh read a letter from the Count d'Artois, intimating that the king's person might be exposed to immediate danger, if the popular fury was roused by their refusal. The question of union was at last carried in the affirmative, and the nobles repaired to the hall of the commons that evening. The proposed meeting of the orders became a popular convention; and, from this moment, the constitution of France may be considered as actually changed, although the commencement of the revolution be dated from a subsequent period. The popular leaders now saw that imperious demand would extort concession; and on this discovery they formed their judgment, and regulated their conduct.

At his majesty's instance they unite with the commons.

THE people seeing the orders united, believed the happiness of France on the eve of completion. All parties agreed on the necessity of correcting the ancient government; the only difference appeared to be respecting the extent to which the reform should be carried, and the means that should be employed. It was hoped that the presence of the nobility and clergy, containing, besides rank, so much of talents and of learning, might restrain the

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the intemperate heat of republicans, while the ardent zeal and bold freedom of the commons might inspire and invigorate the other states; and that thus they should establish liberty without licentiousness; but these expectations were entirely disappointed. The conduct of the court, having before exhibited such a mixture of rashness and timidity, violence and irresolution, consistent in weakness and fluctuation only, soon presented appearances that excited considerable alarm, but much greater suspicion. The states-general, since their consolidation, had been more moderate than at any other period of their session. They had already appointed a committee to prepare materials for the new constitution: Monsieurs Lally Tollendal, and Mounier, two of the most able and temperate leaders, were of this committee; and entertained flattering hopes that the moderation would prove general. The demagogues very early endeavoured to cultivate a close connection between their votaries and the soldiers, and successfully instilled the popular doctrines into these troops. In seducing the army from obedience to their king, the democrats very liberally employed wine, gold, and women, of which last article they had an abundant supply by their alliance with the harlots of Paris. The soldiers, now having their professional daringness and debauchery, without the professional restraints of subordination and military discipline, totally disregarded their officers; left their barracks without leave, repaired to the Palais Royal, joined and even headed the mob in their most enormous excesses, while hand-bills and ballads were composed and dispersed, to spread the flames. The soldiers vied with the populace in their democratic exclamations and other excesses: the most daring and refractory being committed to prison, the people flew in crowds to the jail, forced the gates, liberated the captives, and demanded

The soldiers are infected with the popular enthusiasm.

Insubordination and licentiousness.

for

for them a free pardon. The national assembly endeavoured to accommodate the matter, by exhorting the Parisians to tranquillity, and the king to clemency. His majesty having no efficient force at hand was obliged to comply, and thus ended military discipline and civil government at Paris.

The king orders troops to approach Paris.

THE disorderly state of the metropolis, and the unfitness of the guards for re-establishing tranquillity, were ostensible reasons for bringing a great armed force from the different provinces. In the beginning of July about thirty-five thousand men drew near Paris and Versailles. On the 10th of the month the national assembly presented very strong remonstrances to the king on the approach of the forces. He answered, that he had no other motive for his conduct, than the necessity of establishing and maintaining good order in the capital. He was so far from intending to interrupt the proceedings of the assembly, that if the presence of the soldiery gave them umbrage, he was ready to transfer the states-general to Noyon, or Soissons, and repair himself to some place in its vicinity, where he could maintain a ready communication with the legislative body. The moderate members were willing to accede to this proposal; but the popular leaders were aware of the strength which they derived from the capital, and would not leave its vicinity. They either reposed, or professed to repose, no confidence in the king's assurances, and gave out that a plot was formed by the court to crush the nascent liberties of Frenchmen. The king now appeared evidently to listen to the supporters of the old government, and withdrew his confidence from those counsellors who had been favourable to popular measures. The partizans of the ancient monarchy severely reprobated the conduct of Neckar, to whose republican sentiments and counsels they imputed the degraded state of royal authority: and strongly urged the king to discharge

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M. Neckar dismissed.

discharge a servant who from either design or imprudence [s] had endangered the monarchy. Accordingly on the 11th of July Mr. Neckar was dismissed [t] from administration, and ordered to quit the kingdom, and with him the other members of the cabinet were also discharged from their employments. Mr. de Breteuil, a zealous friend of the old government, was appointed prime minister, and Marshal Broglio, who maintained the same sentiments, commander in chief. On Sunday, the 12th of July, these changes being reported at Paris, caused the greatest despair and fury, and riots prevailed in every quarter. The rashness of the prince de Lambese, who, endeavouring to disperse a riotous body of populace, wounded with his own hand one who was said to be only a spectator, not only increased the tumult, but hastened the general insurrection for which the people were so ripe. The mob, with clubs, spits, and such weapons as they could procure, rushed upon Lambese's troops, and put them to flight, not without killing some of the number.[u] The following night Paris was filled

[s] Bertrand, vol. i. p. 191.

[t] Mr. *Neckar* kept his disgrace a profound secret, even from his wife, and received company that day at dinner, as usual. Those who dined with him did not perceive the least alteration in his countenance. After dinner his wife and daughter invited him to take a ride to the Val, a country-house situated in the forest of *St. Germain*, belonging to Madame *de Beauvais*, an intimate friend of Mrs. Neckar's. He consented, and went into the carriage with his wife, but instead of going to the Val, he took the road to Brussels, in order to be the sooner out of the kingdom.

[u] This transaction of Lambese's appears to have been without any orders from the ministers, or any concert with the other military commanders. Though there were several regiments of foot stationed close to Paris, none of them stirred to assist and protect Lambese's corps. The total inaction of the troops, both on the succeeding day and night, during all which time, critical as the season was, and notwithstanding the preparations they knew to be making in Paris, they never attempted to enter the city, seems to exculpate the court and ministers from the bloody designs imputed to them by the popular party. If such a scheme had been proposed, this would have been the season for its execution, when prevalent confusion and terror would have prevented any effectual plan of resistance. Weakness and folly, indeed, chiefly characterized the ministerial councils of the time. Knowing that in former periods the very appearance of troops had intimidated the Parisian populace, they without adverting to the total change of sentiments and circumstances, seem vainly to have expected the same effect at present.

with

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with a dread of slaughter from the army, and of general plunder from the multitudes of miscreants with which that vast metropolis abounded; but prompt in expedient, they next day generally armed, formed themselves into one great body with the professed intention of securing internal order, and defending themselves against external enemies. They adopted a peculiar cockade for the purpose; and thirty thousand citizens, totally unaccustomed to arms, were soon seen completely accoutred, and in a few hours assumed the appearance of order and discipline. The national volunteers came in a body to proffer to the people their service, which was most joyfully accepted. Directed by the popular leaders, and instructed by their military auxiliaries, the armed citizens prepared to defend the capital against the approaching troops. They threw up entrenchments, and formed barricadoes in different parts of the suburbs. A permanent council was appointed to sit night and day at the Hotel de Ville; and a communication was established between this body and the national assembly. In the course of this day, various robberies being committed, the multitude seizing some of the thieves in the fact, dragged them instantly to the Greve, the common place of execution, and hanged them by the ropes which were used to fasten the lanthorns. Hence originated that most horrid practice of the French mob, making themselves judges and executioners in the same instant, without the smallest regard to law or justice, rank, age, or sex.

An army of volunteers is immediately raised.

The national cockade.

THE next day was the celebrated 14th of July. The new army, early in the morning, attacked the Hotel des Invalids, and taking it by surprise, seized a large magazine of arms and ammunition; thence they proceeded to the *Garde Meuble*, or ancient armoury, forced it open, and distributing the contents among their own body, completed their means for defensive and offensive operations.

They attack the royal magazines to procure arms.

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They now conceived a much bolder design, which was to seize the Bastile; but aware that this fortress was very strong, and amply supplied with provisions for standing a siege, they bethought themselves of attempting stratagem; they accordingly negotiated with the marquis de Launay, and coming to the gates, demanded arms and ammunition. The governor appearing to comply with this requisition, the gates were opened; a great number being admitted over the first bridge, the bridges were drawn up; in a short time a discharge of musketry was heard; but whether from a preconcerted scheme of De Launay, or provoked by the intemperate violence of the citizens, has never been ascertained.[x]. But whoever might be the aggressors, when the firing was heard, the passions of the populace were inflamed to such enthusiasm and fury, that the Bastile, the citadel of Paris, with its seemingly impassable ditches, and its inaccessible towers and ramparts, covered with a powerful artillery, was, after an attack of two hours, carried by storm. De Launay was immediately dragged to the Place de Greve, and miserably murdered. M. de Losme, the

[x] The testimonies on this subject are so extremely contradictory, that an impartial judge would find very great difficulty in devoloping truth, amidst the exaggerations of infuriated passions. Where we can place no reliance on the declarations of witnesses, our opinions must be formed from probability. De Launay could expect no advantage to the royal cause from this partial massacre. Instead of intimidating, he must have seen that it would inflame the Parisians to still more violent outrages. The cruelty imputed by the popular hypothesis was not found in any one authenticated instance to be a part of the royal policy. What purpose could it serve, from what motive could it spring? On the part of De Launay, this hypothesis implies, that from mere wanton barbarity he perpetrated mischief tending most powerfully to ruin himself, and injure his master's cause. Such a supposition is, no doubt, within the verge of possibility, but another view appears much more probable. The Parisians were in a state of the most violent rage and indignation against every supporter of government, and gave full vent to their passions both in words and actions. The Bastile they considered as a great bulwark of despotism, and the receptacle of its most miserable victims: entered into that gloomy mansion, whose horrors had so much occupied their imaginations, and stimulated their passions, and viewing its guards, whom they considered as the minions of atrocious tyranny, nothing could be more likely than that their conduct to the soldiers would be abusive, insulting, and furiously intemperate, and that thence quarrels might arise leading to a bloody catastrophe.

major

major of the Bastile, met with a similar fate, and equal cruelty. When the place was captured, the Parisians loudly exclaimed, let us hang the whole garrison; but the prisoners were saved by the intercession of the national troops. The popular rage now manifested itself in a species of savageness long unknown in civilized Europe. They insulted and mutilated the remains of the dead, and exhibited their heads upon pikes to applauding multitudes; so dreadful were the ingredients already mingled with Gallic liberty. The victorious Parisians, exploring the gloomy dungeons of oppression, in expectation of delivering numbers of unfortunate victims, to their great surprise and disappointment, found only seven captives, four of whom were confined on charges of forgery, and three only were state criminals. So little was this engine of tyranny employed under the mild and humane Louis XVI. When the capture of the Bastile was reported at Versailles, the ministers at first treated it as an extravagant fiction of the democratic party; but they were soon too well assured of the fatal truth. In this situation they formed the absurd resolution of keeping the king in ignorance of what had passed, and urged Broglio to proceed immediately to the reduction of Paris; but he answered, that his troops were infected with the popular spirit, and that he could not rely on their efforts. The ministers and the princes were soon convinced that opposition would be ineffectual, and began to provide for their own safety. The Count de Artois had hitherto used every effort to inspirit the king, and to prevent the downfal of the whole fabric; but he now saw that the attempt was hopeless. At midnight, the Duke de Liencourt, who was master of the wardrobe, forced his way into his majesty's apartment, and informed him of the whole. The king resolved on the most unconditional submission to the national assembly; and repairing thither without guards, early in the morn-

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ing, he declared he resigned himself into their hands; and thus, deserted by its most efficacious supporters, attacked by the combined efforts of the people, and relinquished by its possessor, fell the absolute monarchy of France; and here the historical reader may date the commencement of the French revolution. [y]

Louis arrived in the national assembly, and having declared that his sole reliance was on their wisdom and patriotism, intreated them to use their power for the salvation of the state. He informed them, that he had ordered all the troops to quit the neighbourhood of Paris and Versailles; the Parisians however being still afraid of sieges and blockades, proceeded with preparations for defence. They appointed M. La Fayette commander of their armed corps, to which they gave the name of national guards. The capital was now a great republic, and it soon was so sensible of its power, as to give the law, not only to the unfortunate sovereign, but to the national assembly and the whole kingdom. The national assembly sent a deputation, consisting of eighty-four members, with a view of restoring tranquillity. The Parisians received the deputies with every mark of respect and applause, but expressed a desire that the king himself should visit the city of Paris. This humiliating measure Louis carried into execution on Friday the 17th of July, under a full conviction that he thereby encountered the peril of instant assassination. He was received by a body of twenty-five thousand national guards; and thus led in a melancholy pro-

[y] The susceptibility of the French character renders that people very easily impressed by any address to their senses, imagination, or passions. A song that was composed about this time had a still stronger effect than even that which is ascribed by our historian to the celebrated air Lillibullero *: this was the famous *Ca Ira*, both in the words and music skilfully adapted to the impetuous ardour of impassioned Frenchmen: in rapid strains and expressions, it announced the immediate downfal of existing establishments.

* See Hume, vol. viii. p. 300.

cession,

cession, amidst the loud and continual acclamations of *Vive la nation*, while the ancient favourite cry of *Vive le roi* was not once heard. Being conducted to the hotel, he was obliged to accept the new cockade, and to hear an harangue from the popular leaders, charging the court with all the cruel designs that were reported to have been formed against the city of Paris. Having so clearly and positively denied this imputation, as to impress conviction on the most democratical of his hearers, he returned safely to Versailles, to the great joy of his friends, many of whom never expected to see him again. Meanwhile the princes, and some of the chief nobility, with many of the inferior courtiers, perceiving the popular party paramount, sought safety in flight. The national assembly having signified a wish that Mr. Neckar [z] should be recalled, that minister was invited to return to Paris, and other popular ministers were appointed. Some degree of tranquillity having been re-established at Paris, the national assembly proceeded to the formation of a new constitution. As the ground-work on which they were to build a fabric, they began with forming a declaration of rights. This manifesto was introduced by a remark tending to show, that the ignorance, neglect, or contempt of human rights, are the sole causes of public misfortunes, and to avoid these evils, that it was necessary to define and explain those rights. The declaration contains the outlines of the doctrines afterwards held out by the various revolutionists, and, indeed, is the text that has given rise to the principal class of the comments so long the subject of literary and political discussion. Here was the noted principle brought forward which founded legitimate government upon the NATURAL RIGHTS OF MAN. Declaration of rights.

[z] Mr. Neckar was welcomed both at Versailles and Paris, with such demonstrations of general and excessive joy, that democratic writers compared it to the transports of the Romans on the return of Cicero from banishment.

This

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its fundamental principle the Rights of Man.

This theory, however, supposing mankind susceptible of perfection, deduces its inferences from an assumption which it neither did nor could prove, and which daily experience disproved. Many of the remarks are, no doubt, abstractly true; but they are useless, because they do not apply to circumstances either existing or likely to exist*: on this

* The following is a copy of the declaration of rights, consisting of seventeen articles:

I. Men were born, and always continue, equal in respect of their rights; civil distinctions, therefore, can be founded only on public utility.

II. The end of all political associations is the preservation of the natural and imprescriptible rights of man; and these rights are liberty, property, security, and resistance of oppression.

III. The nation is essentially the source of all sovereignty; nor can any individual, or any body of men, be entitled to any authority which is not expressly derived from it.

IV. Political Liberty consists in the power of doing whatever does not injure another. The exercise of the natural rights of every man has no other limits than those which are necessary to secure to every other man the free exercise of the same rights; and these limits are determinable only by the law.

V. The law ought to prohibit only actions hurtful to society. What is not prohibited by the law should not be hindered; nor should any one be compelled to that which the law does not require.

VI. The law is an expression of the will of the community. All citizens have a right to concur, either personally, or by their representatives, in its formation. It should be the same to all, whether it protects or punishes; and all being equal in its sight, are equally eligible to all honours, places, and employments, according to their different abilities, without any other distinction than that created by their virtues and talents.

VII. No man should be accused, arrested, or held in confinement, except in cases determined by the law, and according to the forms which it has prescribed. All who promote, solicit, execute, or cause to be executed, arbitrary orders, ought to be punished: and every citizen called upon or apprehended by virtue of the law, ought immediately to obey, and renders himself culpable by resistance.

VIII. The law ought to impose no other penalties than such as are absolutely and evidently necessary; and no one ought to be punished, but in virtue of a law promulgated before the offence, and legally applied.

IX. Every man being presumed innocent till he has been convicted, whenever his detention becomes indispensable, all rigour to him, more than is necessary to secure his person, ought to be provided against by the law.

X. No man ought to be molested on account of his opinions, not even on account of his religious opinions, provided his avowal of them does not disturb the public order established by the law.

XI. The unrestrained communication of thoughts and opinions, being one of the most precious rights of man, every citizen may speak, write, or publish freely, provided he is responsible for the use of his liberty in cases determined by law.

XII. A public force being necessary to give security to the rights of men and of citizens, that force is instituted for the benefit of the community, and not for the particular benefit of the persons to whom it is entrusted.

XIII.

this basis they proceeded to raise the new constitution. CHAP. XLIII.

THE practical operation of the principles immediately manifested itself in the acts and proceedings of the national assembly, and the various classes of the French revolutionists. Manifold were the subjects of consideration; but the great and general object was subversion of establishment. In prosecuting this purpose, the energy, susceptibility, and violence of the French character, were clearly displayed. Freed from all the restraints which not only superstition and despotism, but religious and salutary controul, had formerly imposed, they now gave full vent to their dispositions. Their natural ardour was farther goaded to fury by demagogues. The licentiousness of the press even exceeded the licentiousness of the mob, and most powerfully prompted its atrocity. Twenty thousand literary men were daily and hourly employed, not as became superior ability and knowledge, in restraining vicious passions, and in teaching the ignorant the way to virtue and happiness, but in exhorting and stimulating them to outrageous actions. Never was intellectual superiority more disgracefully debased by the venal panegyrist of corrupted courts, or the hired encomiast of titled stupidity and insignificance; than by these adulators of an infuriate populace. But even in scheming and promoting

1789. First acts of the French revolutionists. Great object to subvert establishment.

Licentiousness of the press. Twenty thousand literary men stimulate the mob to outrage.

XIII. A common contribution being necessary for the support of the public force, and for defraying the other expenses of government, it ought to be divided equally among the members of the community, according to their abilities.

XIV. Every citizen has a right, either by himself or his representatives, to a free voice in determining the necessity of public contributions, the appropriation of them, and of their amount, modes of assessment, and duration.

XV. Every community has a right to demand of all its agents an account of their conduct.

XVI. Every community in which a separation of powers and a security of rights is not provided for, wants a constitution.

XVII. The right to property being inviolable and sacred, no one ought to be deprived of it, except in cases of evident public necessity, legally ascertained, and on the condition of a previous just indemnity.

anarchy

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anarchy and disorder, the inventive, bold, and ready genius of Frenchmen appeared. A confederacy was framed, which in its institution and effects, exhibited a new phenomenon in the history of political organs. A combination was first formed of literary men, to associate under the name of a *club*, at their meetings to concert measures which might give the tone to the mob, and through their overbearing influence direct the decrees of the national assembly, and the acts of all municipal, judicial, and executive bodies, and thus make the whole power of France ultimately depend upon their resolves. These demagogues invited into their society such of the populace as they conceived likely to become useful instruments, and exhorted them to construct other clubs, both in Paris, and through all the provinces; and that such meetings should be connected, or to use a new revolutionary metaphor, *affiliated* together. These conventicles consisted first of literary votaries of the new philosophy, who promulgated and inculcated suitable doctrines, sentiments, and conduct. One of the clubs meeting in a convent formerly belonging to the Jacobins, assumed the name of Jacobin Club [b], which afterwards extending to appendant societies, gained a superiority over the rest; and became so noted throughout the world. In the first deliberations of the national assembly, these societies, guided by literary demagogues, and directing the populace, had a powerful influence. Many of the lawgivers were indeed members of the new institutions; and those who were most inimical to the existing establishments, and to rank and property, were held in the highest estimation, and were really the directors of the revolutionists. Various in detail as were the precepts of these innovators; in principle and object they were simple and uniform.

An engine of government new in the history of political establishments. CLUBS.

Their influence extended by affiliation.

[b] Annual Register, 1790. chap. i.

form. Their lessons of instruction, or exhortations to practice, may be compressed in a few words. Religion is all folly; disregard religion and its ministers. Every establishment is contrary to natural right; pull down establishments. Order is an encroachment upon natural freedom; overturn all order. Property is an infringement upon natural equality; confiscate all property. [c] Such was the system generally received in the enthusiasm of reform, through a most extensive and populous nation, distinguished for promptness and fertility of genius, for boldness and activity of character, and by its very virtues rendering its errors more extensively pernicious. To follow through the various and manifold details, the doctrines and objects which guided the national assembly, would be foreign to our history; but assuredly it belongs to our subject to sketch the spirit and principal operations of a revolutionary system by which Britain was so essentially affected.

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THE licentiousness of Paris spread through the provinces; and the peasants, having been long severely oppressed by seignorial tenures and privileges, conceived themselves now emancipated, and turned upon the proprietors with the most outrageous violence. [d] Reports of robberies, rapes, and murders daily reached the assembly. Landed proprietors apprehended the plunder of their property; and some of the nobility, whose possessions were very great, were seized with a sudden impulse of sacrificing a large portion to secure the rest. On the 4th of August, the Viscount de Noailles, and the Duke d'Aguilon, proposed an equalization of taxes, and an abolition of feudal services. This offer striking the assembly and galleries with the warmest admiration, excited in the other proprietors a wish to emulate conduct which was so highly

Lawless violence in the country.

The peasants turn on the proprietors.

Some of the nobility propose to sacrifice a large portion of their privileges and property.

[c] See revolutionary publications at Paris, 1789, *passim*.

[d] Bertrand, vol. 1. c. 11.

applauded.

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1789. Admiration of the commons.

Proposition for the seizure of church property. Remonstrances of the clergy disregarded.

applauded. The nobles and clergy vied with each other in surrendering privileges of their orders, and both these estates concluded with sacrificing their manerial jurisdictions. So far there was nothing but voluntary cession, directed by preventive policy, and stimulated by praise, or flowing from enthusiasm. The next day it was proposed that tythes should be abolished, and church property should be seized by the state. This proposition the clergy eagerly combated, but their remonstrances were ineffectual; and at one blow all the immense property of such a numerous body was confiscated, without the least allegation of delinquency. The Abbe Sieyes, though a friend to the revolution, strongly remonstrated against this forfeiture, as commencing freedom with iniquity.[c] But the sound reasoning, even of a partizan, was unavailing against determined rapacity. Equality being the professed object of the revolutionists, it was proposed that all the provincial distinctions, the peculiar rights and privileges of each district should be abolished, and that, without any local diversity and immunity, or any regard to particular customs, usages, and prescriptions, the whole nation should be consolidated into one compact body. The deputies of privileged towns and districts surrendered the immunities of their constituents, all exclusive claims in every part of France were resigned; and the provinces which had possessed the right of taxing themselves, renounced the power of taxation. The parliaments which had so long held the judicial authority of France, and had been considered as the able, upright, and intrepid guardians of the public welfare, were annihilated. All the canon, ecclesiastical, and political codes of law, all the claims of the court of Rome, all the fees or taxes which

Parliaments are annihilated.

Immunities are sacrificed.

[c] Bertrand, vol. i. chap. xii and xiii.

it

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The law and policy of the kingdom are overturned.

it heretofore received, were abolished. Even the very systems of theology and metaphysics, which had prevailed for so many ages, fell, not under the regular and well-conducted force of reason, but the furious rage of innovation. In a few days the whole law and policy of the nation were changed, a great part of its property was disarranged; and every thing had altered its ancient form and aspect. A revolution more comprehensive and complete in its objects, as well as more minute and particular in its details, than any which is recorded in the annals of mankind, was carried into effect by an assembly of men professing to deliberate, with little more reflection or discussion, than in a senate of prudent lawgivers and statesmen, would have been bestowed on the most ordinary municipal or local regulation. The nobility and clergy in the provinces, not having been impressed with the impassioned enthusiasm from which their delegates in the national assembly had so lavishly surrendered their rights of tythe, without their concurrence, very generally condemned a bounty that bestowed what did not belong to the donors. They were greatly enraged and grieved at the confiscation of their property, and could not think highly of a new system of government, the first specimens of whose character were irreligion and robbery. Resistance, however, they saw would be vain; and they were therefore compelled to acquiesce in the humiliating and plundering decrees. But the pecuniary pressure, the proximate cause of the present crisis, still continued. The peasants considered taxes as an infringement upon liberty, and refused payment; others followed their example, and there was no money to support government, or carry on the public business. After stating the national wants, Mr. Neckar asked for a loan of thirty millions of livres, but the subscription was not filled. A scheme for voluntary contributions

was

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1789. Scheme of voluntary contributions.

Gold and silver utensils carried to the mint.

was adopted, and from its novelty eagerly embraced by this volatile people. All ranks vied in bringing their silver and gold to the public treasury, nor was coin only produced, but also plate, and the minutest articles of dress. The members of the assembly themselves, in their bountiful patriotism, agreed to sacrifice their shoe-buckles to the exigencies of the community. The king and queen sent their gold and silver plate to the mint for coinage. These offerings, however, were very inadequate to the supply of the public wants. A scheme was proposed by Mr. Neckar, and after many strong objections and remonstrances, embraced by the national assembly, for applying one FOURTH of every man's annual income to the wants of the state.[f]

Preparations for the new constitution.

HAVING made these very momentous changes respecting corporate and private property, they proceeded now to new-model their constitution, according to the declaration of rights. The assembly was divided into sections and committees[g]; to each of which was assigned a specific part of the new polity, to be prepared, and grooved with the rest. The first question considered respecting the constitution was of the very highest importance; what share of authority the king should possess in the new legislature? On the solution of this problem it was to depend whether the royal power should be strong enough to restrain the violence of democracy. On the one hand, it was proposed that the king should possess a veto, or negative, in the passing of a law; on the other, that he should be merely the chief executorial magistrate, without any voice in the legislation. For the negative voice were ranged, not only all the friends of the ancient monarchy, but the majority

Authority to be possessed by the king.

[f] Annual Register, 1790. chap. ii.
[g] Bertrand, vol. i. chap. 13.

of

of the nobility and clergy; now sensible that they had conceded too much; apprehensive that their total ruin was intended, and desirous in the kingly prerogative to preserve a bulwark which might afford some defence to the remaining rights, to resist the torrent of democracy. Against it was opposed the whole body of the commons, who containing many subordinate divisions, agreed in the general desire of reducing the monarchy. The question was agitated with great force and violence on both sides. The opposition of the privileged orders was represented by demagogues to arise from an intention of attempting a counter revolution; and the people were transported into fury and alarm. Louis himself, ever desirous of accommodating differences, satisfying all parties, and maintaining tranquillity, made a proposal of a compromise, by which he should have a power of suspending a law during two legislatures; but that if the third assembly persisted in its support, he should be obliged to give it his sanction. This proposal proving satisfactory to both parties, a decree passed, conferring these prerogatives on the king, under the denomination of *a suspensive veto*.[h] Another question was now discussed, also of very great importance. Whether the national assembly should be composed of one or of two chambers. Lally Tolendal, Clermont, Mounier, and other leaders of the moderate reformers, were equally zealous with the republicans for the establishment of a free government; but, considering a limited monarchy as affording the fairest prospect of beneficial and permanent liberty, they ardently recommended a senate, and a house of representatives, which should controul the proceedings of each other, agreeably to the principle, and nearly after the model of the British constitution. From the narrow and inte-

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Suspensive veto.

Question if the assembly was to be composed of one or two chambers.

[h] Bertrand, vol. ii. chap. xiv.

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rested impolicy of many of the nobles and clergy, who vainly hoped for the re-establishment of the three chambers, together with the predominance of the republicans, this proposal was entirely overruled. The commons reprobated every species of mixed government, and steadily abstaining from imitation of England, proposed, and carried, that the duration of the French legislative assembly should be only two years. Notwithstanding the rage for innovation, they confirmed the hereditary succession of the crown according to the Salic law. The friends of the duke of Orleans eagerly contended that the assembly, by confirming the renunciation of the first Bourbon king of Spain [1], should render their patron next heir after the king, his son, and brothers. But the assembly, however violent and precipitate in what concerned France only, cautiously refrained from giving umbrage to other powers; and avoided the discussion. Meanwhile the furious republicans, both in the clubs and the national assembly, resolved that the residence of the royal family, and the legislature, should be changed from Versailles to the capital, where they would be still more completely under the controul of democratic direction. The court, and especially the queen, conceived the greatest horror at the idea of a compulsory abode, among so tumultuous, bloody, and ferocious a people. A transaction which took place in the beginning of October, accelerated the removal of the king and his family to a scene which they had so much reason to dread.

Carried that there should be only one. The commons reprobate the example of Britain. Settlement of the succession.

Ferocity of the people

enflamed by scarcity.

Among other causes of popular violence, famine still raged throughout France, but particularly in Paris and Versailles. To repress the tumults, additional troops were ordered to march to the royal habitation. The king himself was still allowed to have about his person a regiment of his own life-

Additional troops arrive at Versailles.

[1] Bertrand, vol. ii. chap. xiv.

guards;

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guards; and the newly arrived corps was the regiment of Flanders. The gentlemen of the stationary forces, on the arrival of the strangers, according to the established custom of military hospitality, gave their brother officers an entertainment. In the course of their festivity, when both hosts and guests were heated by wine, the king and queen, with the infant dauphin, visited the banquetting room. The royal mother carried the infant prince completely round the table. Meanwhile the music played an air[k] which the ladies of the court accompanied with the appropriate stanzas pathetically describing the feelings and sufferings of a captive king.[l] The power of music, and the charms of beauty, combining with inherent loyalty, inspired the company with an enthusiasm which wine drove beyond all bounds of caution. Drawing their swords, they drank copious bumpers to the august health of their illustrious visitors and their family, successively[m], while the chief personages, having expressed their warmest gratitude, retired. In such a disposition of mind, no moderation could be expected. A scene of complete intoxication ensued, and exhibited without disguise, and with augmented fervour, the sentiments with which it commenced. All the extravagance followed which wine could produce on romantic fancies and impassioned hearts.

Entertainment given by the officers in the palace to the new comers.

The royal family visit the banquetting room.

The queen presents the infant dauphin to the officers.

Music describes the sufferings of a captive king.

Effects of beauty, music, and wine.

[k] Bertrand, vol. ii. chap. xiv.

[l] Taken from a dramatic work, founded on the story of Richard Cœur de Lion's captivity, when returning from the Holy Land, and beginning, "O Richard, O mon Roi."

[m] Bertrand, who gives a very particular account of this entertainment, mentions the following circumstance, which I do not recollect to have seen in any other publication. "I have (he says) been assured by two persons who were present at this entertainment, that the words *to the health of the nation* were also pronounced feebly by one of the guests, or one of the spectators, and that the not repeating or seconding this toast, was attended with no consequences. The custom of drinking to the health of the nation had not been then established, and one may be allowed, without a crime, to think that was not the moment for introducing such an innovation; yet one of the greatest crimes imputed to the *gardes-du-corps*, was their not being willing to drink to the health of the nation, that is to say, to their own health, for they were indisputably a part of the nation."

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The officers trample the national cockade.

The national cockades were by the officers of Flanders torn from their hats, and trampled under [n] foot; and in their place were substituted old royal cockades, supplied by the ladies of the court, who took white ribbands from their own head-dresses, to decorate the loyal officers, while the three-coloured cockade was treated with contempt and scorn. This banquet was really no more than an excess of conviviality, at a season when prudence would have dictated reserve; but being exaggerated by all the circumstances which malicious invention could devise, filled Paris with the most violent rage. The innovating leaders pretended that the conduct of the officers and courtiers arose from counter-revolutionary projects, with exulting joy from the confident expectations of success: a conspiracy, they affirmed, was matured for the restoration of despotism, and that the queen was at its head. The carousal of the royalists, at the time that the people wanted bread, was a flagrant insult to the nation. These sentiments were disseminated by the various classes and factions that were friendly to innovation; but were spread with peculiar activity by the adherents of the duke of Orleans.

Report of the entertainment at Paris.

Rage and indignation of the revolutionists.

Character and projects of the duke of Orleans.

Louis Philip Bourbon, duke of Orleans, was the descendant and representative of the only brother of Louis XIV., and after the posterity of that monarch, next heir to the throne of France. In such an elevated rank, with riches far beyond the measure of any other European subject, he had devoted his youth to the most profligate debauchery: his vices, by their coarseness, excited the indignant contempt of a gentleman almost as much as the enormity of his crimes called on him the detestation of every virtuous man. His wealth affording him the means of very extensive depravity, enabled him to corrupt great numbers of the youth, and

[n] Annual Register, 1789.

even

even to make considerable advances in vitiating the metropolis; and his habitation at the Palais Royal, far exceeded any other part of the French capital in variety, extent, and flagrancy of wickedness. Such was the mode of life by which this prince was distinguished by the time he had reached his fortieth year. His reputation, however, did not rest solely on uniform and habitual debauchery: other species of turpitude concurred in rendering him at once flagitious and execrable. Opulent as Orleans was, he was boundless in avarice. The duc de Penthiévre, high admiral of France, was one of the wealthiest noblemen of his country. Orleans cast his eyes on the daughter of this minister, but the son Lamballe intervened: with this youth he cultivated a close intimacy, and according to the concurrent accounts of various writers[o], was the means of shortening the brother's life, after which he married the sister, now heir of her father's possessions. He moreover proposed to secure the reversion of Penthiévre's very lucrative post. With this view he entered the navy, and the first time he saw an enemy, a descendant of Henry IV. betrayed the despicable degeneracy of personal cowardice[p]. Such an exhibition effectually destroyed all his pretensions to naval promotion; and he conceived the blackest vengeance against the royal family, because the king would not entrust the supreme direction of his navy to a person who was afraid to fight: various circumstances also rendered the queen the peculiar object of his hatred. The commencing discontents in France opened to him prospects not only of revenge, but ambition: he hoped by fomenting disaffection to pave the way for the overthrow of the royal family, and his own advance-

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[o] See Playfair on Jacobinism.—Adolphus's Memoirs.—Picture of Paris, &c.

[p] In D'Orvillier's running fight with admiral Keppel. See this History, vol. ii. p. 424.

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ment to the regency, if not to the throne. Weak as well as wicked, in seeking the downfall of the reigning sovereign, he promoted and headed attacks upon the monarchical authority; and what he sought by villany, by folly laboured to impair. He did not reflect that the doctrines which he promoted tended to overturn the crown which he pursued. He was so infatuated as to suppose that the bold and able leaders of a revolution which annihilated all adventitious distinctions, would labour to exalt a person, who, destitute of genius and of courage, had none but adventitous distinctions to boast. Since the subversion of the old government, he had abetted the most violent and licentious proceedings of the revolutionary mobs. Sagacious agitators at once saw his designs, and their futility, and professing to be his agents, used him as their dupe. The most eminent of his declared partisans at this time was Mirabeau, who, at certain periods, appears to have desired the promotion of Orleans to be regent of the kingdom, in the expectation of being the supreme director himself. Mirabeau very actively promoted the rage of the Parisians: he and his agents pretended to impute the scarcity to the machinations of the aristocrats, and the absence of the royal family, and encouraged the popular cry for the removal of the king to Paris. He promoted the belief of a conspiracy by the queen, and even intimated an intention of impeaching her majesty, as a conspirator for destroying the freedom of the people, and keeping bread from the Parisians.

The mob determines to bring the king to Paris.

These topics being repeated in the capital, the malignity of the Orleans' faction, revolutionary enthusiasm, and popular licentiousness, concurred with the scarcity in producing a determination to hasten to Versailles to demand of the king bread, punishment of the aristocrats, and especially the guards. A

[q] Bertrand, vol. ii. chap. xvii.

multitude

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multitude of the lowest women undertook this expedition; these amazons broke open the town-house, seized the arms there deposited, and meeting on the stairs a priest, required no farther proofs of his guilt than his dress; and commenced their orgies by hanging him to a lamp-post. With the yell of infuriate savages they set out for Versailles, joined by Maillard, a creature of Orleans, and a favourite spokesman in the Palais Royal, with a few of his associates. They proceeded on their march: and meeting two travellers in the dress of gentlemen, they concluded them to be aristocrats, and hanged them without further enquiry. Arriving at Versailles, they sent Maillard to the national assembly, to demand the immediate punishment of the aristocrats and the life-guards. The assembly sent their own president with a deputation of the women to wait upon the king. The deputies being thus employed, their constituents set about drinking — an operation for which their hasty departure in the morning had not allowed them time, and the road had not afforded materials. In half an hour the greater number of them were completely intoxicated. Thus prepared, they broke into the national assembly, not only filled the galleries, but took their seats among the lawgivers, overwhelmed them with the grossest and the loudest obscenity and imprecations. At last two of them, observing the president's chair to be empty, took possession of it themselves, and dictated the subjects of discussion. Such, even then, was French liberty; such were the assessors who controuled the deliberations of men assembled on the most momentous business that could occupy legislators. While the female army was thus employed at Versailles, the fermentation at Paris rose to an extraordinary pitch, and all classes of the populace burned with anxiety to know the result of the expedition. The national guards became so impatient, that they compelled their officers to lead them

Movement of the women for that purpose. They hang priests and aristocrats.

Expedition to Versailles.

The women overawe the legislature, break into the assembly, and take the president's chair.

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to Versaillès, and declared their resolution to join in obliging the king to repair to Paris. La Fayette, the commander, though a friend to the new constitution, was favourably disposed to the person of Louis [r], as well as to the authority [s] which the new system had conferred on the sovereign, and was the adversary of violent republicans on the one hand, and of the Orleans' faction on the other. He endeavoured to dissuade his soldiers from this expedition, but found that the attempt would be impracticable; he therefore tried to moderate its operation. As the guards made no scruple of publicly proclaiming their opinions and sentiments on national affairs, La Fayette and his officers easily discovered whence their present thoughts and intentions originated. The grenadiers informed the general, without reserve, they understood the king to be an idiot, therefore they (the grenadiers) would not hesitate to declare, that matters must go on much better by the appointment of a regent. As this was the peculiar language and doctrine of Mirabeau and other directors of the Orleans' faction, there could be little doubt where either the politics or the march of the guards originated. [t] Many of the soldiers also declared an intention of massacring the queen. The Parisian guards arrived at Versailles late in the evening, and were most cordially received by the national guards at Versailles, the mob of the same place, and the amazons of Maillard. [u] The most ferocious of the guards and other mob in the morning surrounded the palace, and, with dreadful howlings, denounced the murder of the queen; and the palace was filled with consternation. But Marie Antoinette was not

[r] Bertrand, chap. xvi.
[s] Bouillé's Memoirs.
[t] Annual Register, 1790, page 48.
[u] Bertrand informs us, that this man was rather turbulent than malignant, and even tried to preserve some degree of moderation among his troop; which was certainly, in their present condition, no easy task.

frightened.

frightened. Amid crimes (says Bertrand), alarms, confusion, and general stupor, the queen majestically displayed the sublimest and most heroic character. Her constant serenity, her countenance, firm and ever full of dignity, transfused her own courage into the soul of all who approached her. On that day she received a great deal of company. To some who expressed uneasiness, she replied, "I know they are come from Paris to demand my head; but I learned of my mother not to fear death, and I will wait for it with firmness." Her answer to the advice given to her, to fly from the dangers that threatened her, does not less deserve to be recorded. — "No, no," said she; "never will I desert the king and my children: I will share whatever fate awaits them." Some hours of sleep happily came to repair her exhausted strength, and to enable her to encounter on the next day, with equal magnanimity, dangers still more horrid. About half past five in the morning, the repose of the princess received a frightful disturbance. An immense crowd endeavoured to break down the palace-gate, and after murdering two of the life-guards, effected their purpose. Dreadful howlings announced their entrance into the palace: they soon arrived at the foot of the great staircase, and ran up in crowds, uttering imprecations and the most sanguinary threats against the queen.[x] Before six they forced their way to the apartments of the royal consort. The centinel, Monsieur de Miomandre, perceiving the ruffians, called out, "Save the queen; her life is sought: I stand alone against two thousand tigers." Her majesty escaped by a private passage into the king's apartment. Louis, flying to her relief, was met by his own guards, who escorted him back to his apartments, where he found his queen and children arrived. The ruffians now endeavoured to force the anti-

The mob assault the palace;

attempt to murder the queen; prevented by the heroism of her defenders.

[x] Bertrand, vol. ii. p. 112.

chamber,

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chamber, which a body of loyal guards defended with heroic courage; but their number was decreasing under the murdering hands of the banditti. The assassins had almost entered the apartment when the persuasions and supplications of Fayette and his officers induced them to desist. Meanwhile, the furious mob in the outer court demanded the appearance of the king and queen: the royal pair was persuaded to present themselves on the balcony. An universal cry arose, "To Paris, to Paris." Refusal or remonstrance would have been instant death: the king's assent was immediately notified, and the furious rage converted into the most tumultuous joy. Within an hour began the procession, more melancholy and humiliating to the king and queen than any which history records of captive princes exhibited as spectacles to triumphant enemies. The sovereign of a mighty and splendid monarchy; so long and so recently famed for learning, arts, sciences, and civilization; renowned for the generosity, honour, and valour of its nobility; the courage and discipline of its numerous and formidable armies; their zealous and enthusiastic affection for their king and his family; the ardent loyalty of the whole people; was now, without foreign invasion or war; without any avowed competitor for his throne; even without any acknowledged rebellion of his subjects, with his queen and family, dragged from his palace, and led in triumph by the offscourings of his metropolis, the lowest and most despicable of ruffians, the meanest and most abandoned trulls.

The king and queen agree to depart for Paris.

Mournful procession of a degraded monarch.

FROM the 6th of October, 1789, the king is to be considered as a prisoner at Paris. Mounier, equally the friend of liberty and of monarchy, from these horrid transactions augured the downfall of both. He and other penetrating observers saw that the outrages were not the mere accidental ebullitions of a temporary and local frenzy, but the effects of a general cause. He, Lally Tolendal, and others of the

Farther proceedings at Paris.

the moderate party, who had been the vigorous and ardent advocates of a limited monarchy, now seeing their efforts unavailing, seceded from the assembly. But the just and virtuous Mounier, before his retirement, established an inquiry into the recent massacres. The national assembly followed the king to Paris. The republican party now began to express suspicions of the duke of Orleans, which they had before entertained; though finding him and his creatures instrumental to their designs, they had made use of his agency as long as it was wanted. Become now so powerful, they thought proper to drop the mask, and intimated to him through Fayette, that his presence in France was incompatible with the public good: he was accordingly compelled to retire into England. At this time the Parisian mob promulgated its resolution to take the administration of justice into its own hands; and accordingly hanged several aristocrats (especially bakers) at the lamp-post. The assembly, from regard to its own safety, resolved to prevent so summary proceedings. They passed a very effective decree, by which the municipal magistrates were obliged to proclaim martial law whenever the mob proceeded to outrage. They instituted a criminal inquiry into the late murders; several ring-leaders were hanged, and terror thus was struck into the rest. Some degree of tranquillity was established in the metropolis; and the assembly proceeded with less interruption and greater security in its schemes of legislation.

The existing government endeavours to quell the mob.

Severe prosecutions for that purpose.

Such were the leading features and principal acts of the French revolution in 1789. Britons rejoiced at the overthrow of the old French government because so contrary to the liberty which they themselves enjoyed. A change from such a system they concluded must certainly be an improvement.

Effects of the French revolution in Britain. Detesting the old government, and not acquainted

[y] Annual Register, 1790.

They

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with the new, Britons approve the change as friendly to liberty.

Sentiments of various classes.

They trusted that the alterations in France would generate a government similar to the British constitution. Presuming beneficial effects from the French revolution, the greatest part of the people rejoiced at this event. The generous feelings of Englishmen sympathized with the assertors of liberty, before they had time and opportunity to ascertain its effects on the situation and characters of its new votaries. Men whose classical erudition had a greater influence in forming their opinions than experience and reason; who judged of political wisdom more from the practice of the ancient republics than from history, investigation of character, and circumstances, admired what they conceived to be approaches to the democratic institutions of Greece and Rome. Scholars, chiefly eminent for philology, were, with very few exceptions, admirers of a system[z] that they supposed similar to those which they found delineated and praised in their favourite languages. Literary men of a higher class than mere linguists; persons of profound metaphysical and moral philosophy, but of more genius and speculative learning than conversancy with practical affairs, commended the lawgivers of France for taking for their guide the "polarity of reason, instead of following the narrow and dastardly[a] coastings of usage, precedent, and authority." There were many who, forming their ideas of civil and political liberty from their own abstractions more than from experience, admired the French for declaring the equality of mankind, and making that principle the basis of government, instead of modifying it according to expediency. This latter class comprehended the greater number of eminent projectors of civil and ecclesiastical reform, who long had considered even Britain herself deficient in the

[z] The instances are numerous, as the observing reader can easily recollect without particularisation.

[a] See Vindiciæ Gallicæ.

liberty

liberty which their fancies represented as deducible from the rights of man. Various political societies had been constituted for different purposes of reform, but of late years the most active of them had manifested principles too abstract and visionary [b] to be practicably consistent with the British constitution, or, indeed, any form of government founded upon an opinion that human nature is imperfect, and requires controuls proportioned to the prevalence of passion. These societies [c] praised the French revolutionists, and recommended their example as a glorious pattern for the human race. They sent congratulations to the French leaders. A regular official correspondence was carried on between the members of private clubs in England, and the leaders of the republican revolution in France. Statesmen of high rank, and of the highest talents [d], venerating liberty in general, presumed French liberty would render its votaries happy; and imputing the aggressions of France on this and other nations to the corrupt ambition of her court, anticipated tranquillity from her renovated state, and rejoiced at a change that appeared to them to forbode peace to Britain and to Europe. These admirers of the French revolution were stimulated by British patriotism as well as love of freedom. The excesses they saw and lamented, but tracing them to their source, they imputed them to enthusiasm; which, reasoning from experience, they trusted, though furiously violent in its operation on such characters, would gradually subside, and leave only the ardour of useful reform and improvement. The ablest men on the side of administration, abstained from delivering any opinion concerning the internal proceedings of a foreign state which had

[b] See Price's Discourse of the love of our country, November 4, 1789, in Priestley, passim; also, Writings of their votaries, passim.
[c] Revolution Club and Society for Constitutional Information.
[d] See Speeches of Messrs. Fox and Sheridan in session 1790.

not

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not then interfered with ours. At the end of 1789, by far the greater number of all classes and parties in Britain was friendly to the French revolution; and its favourers included a very great portion of genius and learning, while none was hitherto exerted by our countrymen on the opposite side. Such was the impression which this extraordinary change of Gallic polity produced in the most liberal and enlightened of neighbouring nations.

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Meeting of parliament. — At the beginning of the session little debate or discussion. — Mr. Fox takes an opportunity of praising the French revolution — commends the conduct of the French army in supporting the cause of the people against an arbitrary court — likens them to the English army supporting the prince of Orange — deems the French revolution, in many respects, similar to the deliverance of England. — His friend and political associate, Mr. Burke, manifests a different opinion — unfolds his view of the French revolution — considers its principles, and the characters on which they are operating — points out its first effects, and deduces the outrageous excesses from its nature and doctrines — deprecates the French system as a model for England — denies the allegations of similarity between the French and British revolution — praises the excellence of the British constitution, as contrasted with the French system. — Mr. Sheridan concurs in Mr. Fox's praises of the French revolution. — Mr. Pitt, praising the British constitution, delivers no opinion on the French system. — Dissenters again propose to seek the repeal of the test act. — Circumstances apparently favourable to the hopes of the dissenters — they are strenuously opposed by the members of the church. — Work, entitled Review of the Case of the Protestant Dissenters. — Dissenters trust their cause to the transcendent talents of Mr. Fox — his view of the subject, and answers to objections. — Mr. Pitt continues to treat admissibility to offices as a mere question of expediency — deems the leaders of the dissenters inimical to our establishment — adduces from the conduct of the dissenters and the situation of political affairs arguments against the repeal. — Mr. Burke speaks on the same side. — Majority against the proposed repeal. — Mr. Flood proposes a plan for a parliamentary reform — his subtle theory is controverted by Mr. Windham — withdraws his motion. — Petitions from manufacturers of tobacco, praying to repeal the law subjecting them to excise. — A

motion

motion to that effect by Mr. Sheridan — is negatived. — Financial statements. — Prosperous situation of the country. — Mr. Dundas presents an account of our East India possessions. — Libels against the commons on account of the management of Hastings's trial — censured. — Dispute with Spain. — Nootka Sound. — Insult offered by Spain — satisfaction demanded. — Conduct of Spain. — King's message to parliament. — Parliament unanimously pledge their support of the king in vindicating the rights of Britain. — Dissolution of parliament. — Warlike preparations. — Diplomatic discussion between Britain and Spain. — Spain attempts to interest France. — The French nation is inimical to war with England. — Spain, hopeless of aid, yields to the demands of Britain. — The disputes are adjusted in a convention.

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Meeting of parliament.

THE British parliament had sitten so late in the preceding year, that it did not meet till the 21st of January 1790. In the opening speech, his majesty mentioned the continuance of the war in the North and East of Europe, and informed the house that the internal situation of different parts of the continent engaged his majesty's most serious attention. Concerned as he was at the interruption of tranquillity, he was persuaded his parliament would join him in entertaining a deep and grateful sense of the favour of Providence, which continued to his subjects the increasing advantages of peace, and the uninterrupted enjoyment of those invaluable blessings which they had so long derived from our excellent constitution. His majesty informed them, that during the recess of parliament, he had been under the necessity of adopting measures for preventing the exportation, and facilitating the importation, of corn. The addresses were voted without opposition or debate; an act of indemnity was proposed, and unanimously carried, respecting the order of council about grain.

At the beginning of

DURING the first weeks of the session, there was

1790.

scarcely any parliamentary discussion, but afterwards some of the most striking efforts of eloquence arose from a subject which was not properly before the house. Such a momentous event as the French revolution, interesting all enlightened men, had very early engaged the ardent mind of Mr. Fox. This illustrious senator venerated and admired liberty; and contemplating the Gallic change, estimated its nature and value by the happiness which, he conceived, from overturning an arbitrary government, it would bestow upon many millions. He spoke with transport and exultation of a great people breaking their chains on the heads of their oppressors, and celebrated the particular acts, both civil and military, that had been most instrumental in effecting the change. As a man, he rejoiced in the subversion of despotism, and as a Briton, in a state from which he forboded tranquillity to this country. When the army estimates were under consideration [a], this distinguished orator first promulgated to parliament his opinions concerning the French revolution. The military establishments proposed were nearly the same as in the former year. Messrs. Pitt and Grenville contended, that though there was no reason to apprehend hostilities from any foreign power, yet the unsettled state of Europe, and the internal situation of several parts of it made it necessary for us to keep ourselves in such a condition as might enable us to act with vigour and effect if occasion should require our exertions. It was (they argued) a preposterous economy to attempt an attack by our weakness, and for a miserable present saving to hazard a great future expense. Our foreign alliances had been approved by all parties, as necessary for the preservation of that balance of power in Europe upon which the permanence of its tranquillity depended;

the session there is little debate or discussion.

Mr. Fox takes an opportunity of praising the French revolution;

[a] February 9th, 1790. See Parliamentary Reports.

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but they could only be rendered effectual for their purpose by our ability to support them with an adequate force. Mr. Fox argued, that our ancient rival and enemy, by her internal disturbances, probably would be disabled from offering us any molestation for a long course of years; and the new form that the government of France was likely to assume would make her a better neighbour, and less propense to hostility, than when she was subject to the cabal and intrigues of ambitious and interested statesmen.[b] He applauded the conduct of the French soldiers during the late commotions: by refusing to obey the dictates of the court, that army had set a glorious example to all the military bodies of Europe, and had shown, that men, by becoming soldiers, did not cease to be citizens. Their conduct (he said) resembled the behaviour of the patriotic soldiers of England when the Prince of Orange landed to assist in preserving our civil and religious liberties: the French revolution, indeed, in many respects was like to the glorious event which established and secured the liberties of England.

commends the conduct of the French army in supporting the people against an arbitrary court. Likens them to the English army supporting the Prince of Orange.

To these doctrines Mr. Fox found an opponent in a very eminent senator, with whom he had coincided during the greater part of his parliamentary life. Habituated to profound meditation on important questions in political philosophy, and thoroughly conversant with history, Mr. Burke had applied himself, with the most watchful attention, to observe the details, and to study the principles, of this extra-

His friend and political associate, Mr. Burke, manifests a different opinion:

[b] Mr. Fox's expectation of tranquillity to other states from the prevalence of freedom in France, even had there been nothing peculiar in the nature of that freedom, and the habits and dispositions of its votaries, seems to have arisen more from theory than from the actual review of the history of free countries. Had the comprehensive and full mind of this philosophical politician called before him his own extensive knowledge of the actions of mankind, he would have immediately perceived that free nations have been as propense to hostility as the subjects of an arbitrary prince. See the several histories of the ancient republics in the Greek, Latin, or modern languages: in our own tongue, Ferguson, Gillies, and Mitford.

ordinary

ordinary change. He had reprobated the old government of France; and although he thought it, in the reign of Louis XVI., softened in its exercise by the progress of civilization, and the personal character of the monarch, still he deemed the welfare of the people to rest on an unstable basis, and to require very considerable reform before it could be a beneficial system. But esteeming arbitrary power a great evil, he knew that unwise efforts to shake it off might produce more terrible calamities. He venerated the spirit of liberty as, when well-directed and regulated, a means of human happiness; his respect for it, in every individual case, was proportionate to his opinion of its probable tendency to produce that end, where he had not actual experience to ascertain its effects. It was not merely the possession of it that constituted it a blessing, but the enjoyment of it to such an extent, and with such regulations as could make it subsidiary to virtue and happiness. Its operation, as a blessing or a curse, depended, he thought, on its intrinsic nature, compounded with the character of its subjects, and, in a certain degree, extrinsic causes; and he uniformly controverted [c] those doctrines of the rights of man which would allow the same freedom to all persons, and in all circumstances. Neither did he conceive, that every one state, though refined, was equally fit for the beneficial exercise of liberty as every other state, which was not more refined. The control, he thought, must be strong in the direct ratio of passion, as well as the inverse ratio of knowledge and reason. Having long viewed, with anxiety, the new philosophy become fashionable in France, he bestowed the most accurate attention on the designs of its votaries, as they gradually unfolded themselves. A sagacity, as penetrating as his views were comprehensive, discovered to him the nature

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unfolds his view of the French re-

[c] See Life of Burke, *passim*.

of

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volution: considers its principles, and the characters on which they were operating:

of those principles which guided the revolutionists, as well as the characters on which they were operating. The notions of liberty that were cherished by the French philosophy he accounted speculative and visionary, and in no country reducible to salutary practice: he thought they proposed much less restraint than was necessary to govern any community, however small, consisting of men as they are known from experience; he conceived also that the volatile, impetuous, and violent character of the French, demanded, in so great a nation, much closer restraints than were requisite in many other states. From the same philosophy which generated their extravagant notions of freedom proceeded also infidelity. He had many years before[d] predicted that the joint operation of these causes, unless watchfully and steadily opposed, would overturn civil and religious establishments, and destroy all social order. The composition of the national assembly, the degradation of the nobility, the abolition of the orders, the confiscation of the property of the church, and many other acts, tended to confirm the opinion which he had formed. Much as he detested the outrages, he reprobated the principles more, and foresaw that in their unavoidable operation, they would lead to far greater enormities: in the spirit and details of the new constitution, he did not expect either happiness, or even permanent existence. The vicinity of France to England made him apprehensive lest the speculations of that country should make their way into this, and produce attempts against a constitution founded on observation and experience, and not on

points out its first effects,

and deduces its outrageous excesses from its nature and doctrines.

[d] This was the opinion which he had maintained of infidelity and speculative politics in general, in his vindication of natural society, and in his letter to the sheriffs of Bristol, and of French infidelity and speculative politics in particular, in his speech after returning from France in 1773*; and in all his speeches and writings, whenever the occasion required his admonition.

* Life of Burke, p. 161.

visionary

visionary theories. The approbation manifested by many Britons, both of the doctrines and proceedings of the French revolutionists, increased his apprehension. When he found that his friend, of whose wisdom and genius he entertained so very exalted an opinion, was among the admirers of the recent changes in France, he was anxious lest a statesman to whose authority so much weight was due, should be misunderstood to hold up the transactions in that country as a fit object of our imitation. Our patriotic ancestors had with cautious wisdom guarded against the contagion of French despotism, which had not only infected our sovereigns Charles and James, but also made some impression on many of their subjects. The danger in the last ages, he observed, was from an example of tyranny in government, and intolerance in religion. The disease was now altered, but far more likely to be infectious. Our present danger arose from atheism instead of bigotry, anarchy instead of arbitrary power. Through an admiration of men professing to be the votaries of liberty, those who did not thoroughly examine the real features of the French revolution, might be led to imitate the excesses of an irrational, unprincipled, proscribing, confiscating, plundering, ferocious, bloody, and tyrannical democracy.[c] He severely reprobated the conduct of the army: the abstract proposition that soldiers ought not to forget they were citizens, he did not combat; but applied to any particular case, it depended entirely on the circumstances: in the recent conduct of the French guards, it was not an army embodied under the respectable patriot-citizens of the state, in resisting tyranny; it was the case of common soldiers deserting from their officers, to join a furious and licentious populace. The conduct of the British soldiery in 1688 was

He reprobates it as an example to England.

[c] See Parliamentary Debates, February 9, 1790.

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totally different from the conduct of the French soldiery in 1789. William of Orange, a prince of the blood royal of England, was called in by the flower of the English aristocracy to defend its ancient constitution, and not to level all distinctions. To this prince, so warmly invited, the aristocratic leaders who commanded the troops, went over with their several corps, as to the deliverer of their country: military obedience changed its object; but military discipline was not for a moment interrupted in its principle. After enumerating the constituents and acts of the French revolution, he contended that in almost every particular, and in the whole spirit of the transaction, that change differed from the alteration effected by Britain. "We," said Mr. Burke, "took solid securities; settled doubtful questions; and corrected anomalies in our law. In the stable fundamental parts of our constitution, we made no revolution; no, not any alteration at all; we did not weaken the monarchy; perhaps it might be shewn that we strengthened it very considerably. The church was not impaired; the nation kept the same ranks, the same privileges, the same franchises, the same rules for property. The church and state were the same after the revolution that they were before, but better secured in every part."

He controverts the allegation of similarity between the French and British revolutions, and praises the British constitution as contrasted with the French system.

MR. SHERIDAN declared that he entirely disagreed from Mr. Burke concerning the French revolution, and expressed his surprise that a senator, whose general principles had been uniformly so friendly to liberty, and to the British constitution, could declare or feel an indignant and unqualified detestation of all the acts of the patriotic party in France. He conceived theirs to be as just a revolution as ours; proceeding upon as sound a principle, and a greater provocation. Abhorring their excesses, he imputed them to the depravity of the old government, the sentiments and characters which despot-

Mr. Sheridan concurs in Mr. Fox's views of the French revolution.

ism formed. He himself regarded the French revolution as a glorious struggle for liberty, and wished its supporters the fullest success. Concerning the British revolution, he no less differed from Mr. Burke. That event was founded on the same principle with the French change; regard for the rights of man. It overturned tyranny, gave real efficient freedom to this country, which he would wish to see diffused throughout the world.[f] Mr. Pitt testified his high approbation of the principles laid down concerning our excellent constitution; for these he declared this country to the latest posterity ought gratefully to revere the name of Mr. Burke. With that caution which, advancing all that was necessary, abstained from declarations not required by the occasion, Mr. Pitt confined his applause to that part of Mr. Burke's speech which referred to the constitution of Britain. That was a subject of discussion that could never be foreign to a British parliament: concerning the French revolution, as affecting, or likely to affect France itself, he delivered no opinion.

Mr. Pitt, praising the British constitution, delivers no opinion on the French system.

Colonel Phipps and Sir George Howard, as military men, strongly objected to the panegyric pronounced by Mr. Fox, on the French guards, as a model of military conduct, and contrasted their desertion of their master, and junction with rioters, with the behaviour of the British troops, during the disturbances of 1780. Our soldiers did not, in

[f] Mr. Sheridan's admiration of the French revolution appears to have arisen first from considering it as a triumph of liberty over despotism, in which estimate he had not paid an adequate attention to its peculiar nature and principles; and secondly, from an idea that in principle it resembled our revolution, though dissimilarity had been very clearly and strongly stated by Mr. Burke, and that statement, though not admitted, had not been overturned by Mr. Sheridan, or any of his supporters.* His ardent wish for the general diffusion of a liberty producing the greatest blessings to Britain, overlooked the diversities of national characters in different countries. From a partial consideration of the case, instead of an accurate and complete view of every circumstance, and its whole character, appeared to arise the prepossessions of many men of genius and patriotism in favour of the French revolution.

* See Parliamentary Debates, February, 1790.

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violation of their oaths, and of their allegiance, join anarchy and rebellion, but feeling as citizens and soldiers, patiently submitted to the insults of the populace; in spite of provocation, maintained the laws, and acted under the constituted authorities of the realm.

Dissenters again propose to seek the repeal of the test act.

THE dissenters, encouraged by the smallness of the majority which had rejected Mr. Beaufoy's motion of the former year, persevered in their application to parliament; and spared no efforts, either by general appeals to the public, or by canvassing particular members of the legislature; nor were grounds wanting to excite their sanguine hopes of success. The French revolution was favoured by a considerable number of Britons, who venerating the principles of liberty that were enjoyed by themselves, regarded with pleasure the supposed diffusion of freedom to their neighbours. This approbation of the Gallic system, in many was not without a tinge of their peculiar doctrines; and they began to think that the highest perfection of a free government consisted in exemption from restraint. Hence great numbers, totally unconected with the dissenters, and before quite indifferent about their peculiar views and interests, became zealous advocates for the repeal of the test and corporation acts, as inimical to the rights of man, lately promulgated in the neighbouring nation. On these visionary theories the claims of the dissenters were maintained in periodical publications [g], which were employed in promoting their cause, and in other occasional works produced for their service. The leaders of the nonconformists having declared their enmity to the national religion, found ready and willing auxiliaries among those who had no religion at all. The deists, encouraged by the aspect of affairs in France to hope for the speedy diffusion of infidelity, or as they

Circumstances apparently favourable to it.

[g] See Analytical Review, *passim*.

phrased

phrased it, *light*, eagerly joined in a measure tending to weaken the great bulwark of national faith. From the time of the French revolution, we may date a coalition between the deists and the Socinian dissenters, which, in its political or religious effects, afterwards extended to many others. Republicans, aware of the close connection between the church and monarchy, most readily joined a class of men who were alleged to seek the downfall of our ecclesiastical establishment; a change which, they well knew, would tend to the overthrow of the monarchy. Besides this new accession of strength, the circumstance of an approaching election appeared also favourable to the attempt of the dissenters, on account of their great weight and influence in many counties and corporations, and their avowed determination to exert them on the ensuing occasion, in the support of such candidates only as were known, or should promise to be their supporters.[h] Farther to strengthen their cause, they proposed to consolidate with their own, the interests of the Roman catholic dissenters, and from the various constituents of their force, they had sanguine expectations of success.

They are strenuously opposed by members of the church.

On the other hand, the friends of the church, though not so early in their preparations, were fully as vigorous when they did commence. Less numerous, but more forcible, literay efforts were made in defence of our ecclesiastical establishment. The case was argued from the probable tendency of dissent; from actual experience of the general conduct of dissenters, and from the present state of political affairs. On the first head it was observed, that ill-will to the establishment[i] must in all governments belong to the character of the

Work entitled *Review of the Case of Protestant Dissenters.*

[h] This mode of proceeding is much blamed by eminent, but moderate members of their own body, whose opinion I have heard very lately in personal conversation.

[i] See *Review of the Case of Protestant Dissenters;* a celebrated pamphlet imputed to Dr. Horsley.

dissenter,

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dissenter, if he be an honest man, however it may be softened by his natural good disposition, or restrained by political sagacity. A dissenter may occasionally support an establishment which he hates, if he foresee that its ruin would raise another from which his party would meet with less indulgence.[k] But a preference to his own sect is in itself a virtuous principle; every dissenter must be inclined to use any influence or authority with which an imprudent government may entrust him, to advance his sect in the popular esteem, and to increase its numbers. He will employ all means that appear to himself fair and justifiable, to undermine the church, if he hope that its fall may facilitate the establishment of his own party, or some other more congenial to his own. In all this, the crime is not in the man, but in the government entrusting him with a power, which he cannot but misuse. The man himself, all the while, supposes he is doing good, and his country service; and the harm which he may effect under the notion of doing good, will be the greater in proportion to his abilities and virtues: on these undeniable principles the policy of a test is founded. To confirm arguments from probable tendency, appeals were made to facts; and the history of dissenters was traced from the first germs of puritanism to the present time. Under certain restrictions, they had been beneficial to the community, but without these restrictions, they had been hurtful. This position was illustrated by views of their proceedings during the last century; from the attainment of partial advantage, to the overthrow of the church and monarchy, the destruction of rank, confication of property, cruel persecutions, and massacres. The principles which had produced such enormities

[k] The dissenters often cited their fidelity to the house of Hanover and enmity to the Stuarts. This remark was probably intended to account for their zeal.

were

were now cherished and supported, and wanted only predominant power to give them effect. Dr. Priestley, followed by a numerous tribe of votaries, had published his enmity to the church; while Dr. Price had no less publicly proclaimed his enmity to monarchy. They and their disciples had, from the downfall of the orders in France, become more eager in their expectations, more confident in their boasts, and more incessant in their efforts. For these and other reasons founded on the same principles, the most eminent of the prelates, the body of the clergy, and the friends of the church, called to the people to assist them in defending the ecclesiastical establishment. The dissenters, to have an advocate of abilities proportioned to their conception of the importance of the question, entrusted the discussion of their cause to the brilliant and powerful talents of Mr. Fox; and on the 2d of March the orator brought the subject before the house of commons. Acquainted with the arguments employed by Dr. Horsley, and other champions of the church, he directed his reasoning chiefly to impugn their allegations, and pursued nearly the order of those whom he wished to confute. It was, he contended, unwarrantable to infer *a priori*, and contrary to the professions and declarations of the persons holding such opinions, that their doctrines would produce acts injurious to the common weal. Men ought not to be judged by their opinions, but by their actions. Speculative notions ought never to disqualify a man for executing an office, the performance of whose duties depends upon practical abilities, dispositions, and habits. The object of the test laws at first had been to exclude anti-monarchical men from civil offices; but such conduct proceeded upon false pretences, it tended to hypocrisy, and served as a restraint on the good and conscientious only. Instead of a formal and direct oath of allegiance, they resorted, by means of a religious test, to an indirect political

Dissenters entrust their cause to the transcendent talents of Mr. Fox.

His view of the subject,

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political standard. The danger of the church arose only from the supine negligence of the clergy, and the superior activity and zeal of the dissenters, in discharging the duties of their sacred functions. History exhibited the dissenters supporting the principles of the British constitution, while the high church promoted arbitrary power. When this country had been distracted with internal troubles and insurrections, the dissenters had with their lives and properties stood forward in its defence. Their exertions had powerfully contributed to defeat the rebellions in 1715 and 1745, to maintain the constitution, and establish the Brunswick family on the throne: in those times every high churchman was a Jacobite, and as inimical to the family of Hanover, as the dissenters were earnest in their support. An attempt had recently been made, with too great success, to raise a high-church party: the discipline of the church, and the abstract duties which she prescribed, he admired and revered, as she avoided all that was superstitious, and retained all that was essential: he therefore declared himself her warm friend. Individual members of the body he esteemed for their talents, learning, and conduct; but as a political party, the church never acted but for mischief. Objections had been raised for the repeal, from the French revolution; but this great event was totally irrelevant, as an argument against the claims of the dissenters: it had, indeed, a contrary tendency; the French church was now paying the penalty of former intolerance. Though far from approving of the summary and indiscriminate forfeiture of church property, in that country, he could not but see that its cause was ecclesiastical oppression. This should operate as a warning to the church of England; persecution may prevail for a time, but ultimately terminates in the punishment of its abettors. He was aware that the cause which he had undertaken, was not at

and answer to objections.

present

present popular; some of those whom he most highly valued differed with him upon this subject. So far was he individually from having any connection with the dissenters, that in them he had experienced the most violent political adversaries; but regarding their cause as the cause of truth and liberty, he should give it his warmest support both on the present and every future occasion. He concluded with proposing a more specific motion for the revision of the test act, than any which was formerly made.

Mr. Pitt continues to treat admissibility to offices as a mere question of expediency,

Mr. Pitt, after arguing that eligibility to offices in any community was a question not of right but expediency, considered the test-act upon that ground. Presuming the utility of the ecclesiastical establishment to be generally granted, he enquired whether the principles of the dissenters did not aspire at the subversion of the church, and whether their conduct did not manifest an intention of carrying these principles into practice. Mr. Fox had proposed to judge men, not by their opinions, but by their actions. This was certainly the ground for procedure in judicial cases; but in deliberative, the policy of prevention was often not only wise but necessary; opinions produced actions, therefore provident lawgivers and statesmen must often investigate opinions, in order to infer probable conduct. Leading dissenters, from their principles inimical to the church, had indicated intentions immediately hostile; and favourite arguments in their works were the uselessness of an establishment, and the probability that by vigour and unanimity it might be overthrown. Against such avowed designs, it became all those who desired the preservation of the church, firmly to guard. Admissibility into offices of great trust would obviously increase the power of the dissenters: the assertions of their advocates, that their theological opinions had no influence on their political conduct, were

and deems the leaders of the dissenters inimical to our establishment.

most

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most effectually confuted by their own declarations. At a general meeting they had subscribed resolutions recommending to voters to support, at the election, such members only as favoured the repeal. Thus while they themselves reprobated a religious test established by the constituted authorities of the kingdom, they wished to enforce a political test by their own sole authority. Perceiving their general principles practically operating in conduct hostile to the church, he should vote against a repeal, which in the present circumstances he deemed injurious to our establishment.

MR. BURKE, from various details and documents, endeavoured to prove, that the dissenters anxiously desired, and confidently expected, the abolition of tithes and the liturgy; and that they were bent on the subversion of the church.[1] The arguments recently and now employed in the writings and speeches of the friends of the church, the conduct of the dissenters, and the downfall of the French hierarchy, placed in the most striking light by Mr. Burke, added powerfully to the effect of Mr. Pitt's reasoning, and made a deep impression on members of parliament. In a meeting consisting of about four hundred, there was a majority of near three to one against the projected repeal.

The arguments against the application.

Great majority against the repeal.

THE spirit of change extended itself to our political consitution; two days after the rejection of Mr. Fox's motion, Mr. Flood proposed a reform in the representation of the people in parliament. This proposition, like the reasoning for the eligibility of dissenters, was grounded upon abstract theories concerning the rights of men. In a speech replete with metaphysical subtlety, he endeavoured to prove, that in the popular branch of our government, the constituent body was inadequate to the purpose of

Mr. Flood proposes a reform in parliament;

[1] To establish these positions, he quoted passages from the resolutions at the public meetings; their catechisms; the writings of Doctors Price and Priestley, and other supporters of the cause.

elections.

elections. Electoral franchises ought to be formed on principles both of property and number. Electors should be numerous, because numbers are necessary to the spirit of liberty; possessed of property, because property is conducive to the spirit of order. Pursuing these principles through various theoretical niceties, and applying them to the actual state of representation, he endeavoured to evince the necessity of a reform, which should extend electoral franchise to every householder. In answer to this theory, Mr. Windham argued from plain fact and experience, Mr. Flood had proved by an arithmetical statement, what no one denied, that the representation was unequal, but he had not proved from political history and reasoning that it was inadequate. Statesmen and lawgivers should argue from experience, and not from visionary theories; we had no *data* to ascertain the operation of such fanciful projects. Our representation as it stood, answered its purpose, as appeared in the welfare of the people, and the prosperity of the country. According to the present system, it was evident that the influence of the people was very extensive and powerful. It was their voice that, sanctioning, permitted the most important acts of the executorial government; the commencement and continuance of war; the conclusion of peace, and the appointment of ministers were most frequently dictated by the people. Their weight was fully as great as expediency, their own security, and happiness admitted. Besides, were parliamentary reform generally desirable, the present æra of speculation, change, and ferment, was totally unfit for the purpose. Messrs. Burke, Pitt, and others maintaining the same ground, and a great majority appearing inimical to Mr. Flood's plan, he withdrew his motion. These were the only great political questions which engaged the house of commons that

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His subtle theory

is controverted by Mr. Windham.

He withdraws his motion.

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that season; and there they rested, without extending to the peers.

Petitions from dealers in tobacco, praying to repeal the law subjecting them to the excise. A motion to that effect, by Mr. Sheridan,

SUBJECTS of revenue occupied the chief attention of parliament, during the remainder of the session. Dealers in tobacco presented a great number of petitions, praying for the repeal of the act, which subjected that commodity to the excise. Mr. Sheridan took the lead in this subject, and, having in a splendid speech directed his eloquence against the whole system of excise laws, by the fertility of his genius, in his illustrations he gave an appearance of novelty to so very trite a subject. He came at last to the peculiar hardships of the tobacco bill, enforced the objections made the preceding year, and proposed a resolution, that the survey of the excise is inapplicable to the manufactory of tobacco. It was contended by ministers, that the arguments against this application of excise rested on the testimony of dealers, who had derived a great profit from fraudulent traffic, of which they were now deprived by the new mode of collection. It could be no just argument against a plan for the prevention of illicit trade, that it was not sanctioned by the approbation of contraband dealers. Was it unfair or illiberal to doubt the veracity and honour of a smuggler, when he gives testimony concerning his forbidden articles. The extent of former frauds was obvious in the productiveness of the late preventive means. Since its subjection to the excise, the revenue from tobacco had increased upwards of three hundred thousand pounds a year.[m] For these reasons, Mr. Sheridan's motion was negatived by a majority of a hundred and ninety-one to a hundred and forty-seven.

is negatived.

[m] From the statement of the tobacconists, it appeared, that the manufacturers were about four hundred in number; eight millions of pounds were annually smuggled. The revenue of which amounted to four hundred thousand pounds sterling; this sum purloining from the public they divided among themselves, so that each manufacturer on an average gained a thousand a year, by cheating the public.

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In the month of April, Mr. Pitt opened his scheme of finance for the year; having in general stated the prosperous situation of the country, to prove and illustrate his position, he recapitulated the extraordinary expences, defrayed in 1789, in addition to the regular establishment. Notwithstanding these unforeseen demands, though we had borrowed only one million, we had paid six millions of debt. The increase of revenue, which had thus liquidated so many and great charges, originated in two permanent causes, the suppression of smuggling, and the increase of commerce.[n] Our [o] navigation had increased in proportion to our commerce. This prosperity arose from the industry and enterprize, and capital, which are formed and protected under the British constitution. A system productive of so momentous benefits, it was our most sacred duty to defend against all innovations. Mr. Sheridan endeavoured, as in the preceding year, to controvert the minister's calculations, and through the same means; by including, in a general average, the year 1786, that had been unproductive from causes peculiar to itself. The supplies for the army, navy, and ordnance, were nearly the same as in the former year: no new taxes were imposed; but there was a lottery as usual.

Financial statements.

Prosperity of the country.

[n] The exports for the year 1789, as valued by the Custom-house entries, amounted to no less a sum than 18,515,000*l.* of which the British manufactured goods exported, amounted to 13,490,000*l.* Upon an average of the exports six years prior to the American war, which average he took on account of those years being the period in which our commerce flourished most, it appeared, that the British manufactured goods exported amounted to no more than 10,343,000*l.* The imports for that year amounted to a higher sum than was ever before known, being valued at 17,828,000*l.* This increase of import, which might at first appear disadvantageous, as it might seem to lessen the balance of trade in favour of the country, Mr. Pitt, having traced to its real source, showed to arise from circumstances demonstrating the wealth and prosperity of the nation. It issued in remitted property from the East and West Indies, from the increased products of Ireland, shewing the growing prosperity of the sister kingdom, from the Greenland and South Wales fisheries, being wealth poured in from the ocean.

[o] In the year 1773, there belonged to British ports 9224 vessels, and 63,000 seamen; and in the year 1785, 11,085 vessels, and 83,000 seamen, showing an increase of seamen in 1788, above the number in 1773, of no less than one-third.

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Mr. Dundas presents an account of our East India possessions.

MR. DUNDAS, about the same time, presented an account of the financial state of India. The result of his statement was, that the revenue considerably exceeded the product of the former [p] year; and that the increase, though, in some particulars, owing to temporary circumstances, was chiefly the effect of permanent causes. The system of justice and moderation adopted from the time that the territorial possessions were subjected to the controul of the British government, had produced the most beneficial consequences both to the natives and to this country. The landed revenues being much more willingly paid, were much more easily collected. The friendly intercourse between the Hindoos and the British had suggested various improvements in the collection. Fostered by a humane and equitable administration, the internal commerce of our India settlements had greatly increased. Observing rigid faith with the Indian natives, we had to encounter no formidable confederacies, which should at once diminish territorial improvement, and cause enormous expences. Prosperity arising from a general scheme of policy at once wise and liberal, must increase with accelerated rapidity. In a few years the Company would be enabled to pay off their arrears [q]: British India would be more flourishing in wealth, in commerce, manufactures, and in every enjoyment, than any

[p] The revenues of Bengal amounted to £5,019,999
of Madras 1,213,229
of Bombay 118,223

Charges of Bengal	£3,183,250	£6,351,451
of Madras	1,302,037	
of Bombay	568,710	5,053,997
	£5,053,997	£1,297,454

To this amount of the net revenue was to be added 230,361*l.* for exports; and the sum of 65,000*l.* charges for Bencoolen and the Prince of Wales's island; leaving, on the whole, a net sum of 2,147,815*l.* applicable to the discharge of debts, and the purchase of investments.

[q] The debts of the company for the last year were 7,604,754*l.*; those of the present year 6,501,385*l.*, giving a decrease of 1,103,369*l.*

other

other part of the whole continent of Hindostan. In the present state of our power, we certainly had no danger to apprehend from any European nation. Holland was in alliance with us, and the French were not in a situation to disturb British India. We had still one enemy in the country, but without European auxiliaries, unsupported by the other native powers, Tippoo Saib could not be formidable to the British force. Mr. Francis endeavoured to controvert Mr. Dundas's allegations respecting both the territorial and commercial situation of affairs, and rested his objections chiefly upon extracts from letters. These Mr. Dundas insisted, being garbled, were partial and incomplete evidence; and resolutions, formed on Mr. Dundas's statement, were proposed and adopted. The house voted several sums as a recompence for service, and an indemnification for losses sustained in the cause of the public. On a message from his majesty, parliament bestowed an annuity of a thousand pounds for twenty years on Dr. Willis, who, under Providence, had been so instrumental in restoring to the country so valuable a blessing.[r] The salary of the speaker was augmented from three thousand to six thousand a year. In a committee upon American claims, Mr. Pitt represented to the house the losses sustained by the family of Penn; their case was different from that of any of the other American loyalists, and therefore could not be governed by the rules which the house had established respecting the generality of cases. He proposed to grant to them and their heirs four thousand per annum out of the consolidated fund. Mr. Wilberforce moved for the consideration of the slave-trade; most of the time allotted to that subject was occupied in hearing evidence, and no bill was introduced during this session.

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THE trial of Mr. Hastings made but little progress during the present session. The court sat but thirteen days, in which the managers of the

Libels against the commons on account of Hastings' trial.

[r] See vol. iv. chap. 41.

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house of commons went through the charge relative to the receipt of presents, which was opened by Mr. Anstruther, and summed up by Mr. Fox, in a speech which lasted two days. Mr. Burke detailed the circumstances which retarded the trial: the appointed mode of procedure had increased the difficulties and delays; the managers had proposed in the written evidence, to confine recital of letters and papers to such extracts as related to the charges; but the counsel for Mr. Hastings insisted on reading the whole of such documents, though many of them were extremely long; and the lords had agreed that no partial quotation from any paper could be received as evidence; that either the whole contents, or no part should be adduced; and the resolution evidently tending to promote impartial and complete enquiry, Mr. Burke complained of as an obstacle to the prosecution. It was, however, he contended, the duty of the house of commons, and their managers, to persevere in the trial, without regarding any hindrances which might occur. He moved two resolutions to that effect, and the motions were both carried. Mr. Hastings continued to have a most zealous and ardent advocate in Major Scott, who very frequently employed not only his tongue but his pen in the cause. Scott had indeed a great propensity to literary exhibitions; and sundry letters to editors of newspapers, and several pamphlets, manifested his zeal as a pleader, and his fruitfulness as an author. Among his other effusions was a letter subscribed with his own name, in a newspaper called the Diary; this essay contained many injurious assertions against the managers, and also blamed the house of commons for supporting the impeachment. On the 17th of May General Burgoyne complained of the letter as a gross libel. Major Scott avowed himself the author; but declared that he meant no offence to the house. If he had been guilty of an error,

error, he had been misled by great examples; Messrs. Burke and Sheridan had published *stronger* libels than ever he had written.[s] After offering this defence, Scott withdrew from the house; several motions of censure were made, and various modifications were offered. Mr. Burke was very urgent that an exemplary punishment should be inflicted; the conduct of Mr. Scott, he averred, had been extremely reprehensible: from the commencement of the prosecution he promoted libels against the managers, and their constituents.[t] After a long consideration it was agreed, that the letter should be voted a gross libel, and that the author should be censured in his place.

Dispute with Spain about Nootka Sound.

WHILE the nation flourished in the enjoyment of peace, an alarm arose that so beneficial a tranquillity would be speedily interrupted. On the 5th of May Mr. Pitt delivered a message from his majesty to the commons, and the duke of Leeds to the peers, intimating an apprehension that the peace, during which Britain had so greatly prospered, might be broken. The following were the circumstances in which the message originated. During the last voyage of the celebrated Cook, the Resolution and Discovery having touched at Nootka (or Prince William's) Sound, the crews purchased a considerable number of valuable furs, which they afterwards disposed of to very great advantage in China; and Captain King, who published the last volume of Cook's voyages, recommended the traffic with those northern coasts, as very lucrative. In consequence of this advice, some mercantile adventurers settled in the East

[s] If either of these gentlemen published libels, few will controvert the Major's opnion, that they must be *stronger* than any which he wrote.

[t] Mr. Burke said, he was well assured, that not less than twenty thousand pounds had been expended in libels supporting Mr. Hastings; that Major Scott was his agent in all these cases, and the common libeller of the house.

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Indies [u], and having consulted Sir John Macpherson the governor-general, with his consent they undertook to supply the Chinese with furs from those regions, and also ginseng, an article that was likewise plentiful: for this purpose they fitted out two small vessels. The trade proved so advantageous, that in the year 1788 the adventurers determined to form a permanent settlement. With this view Mr. Mears, the gentleman principally concerned, purchased ground from the natives, and built a house which he secured and fortified, as a repository for his merchandize. The following year the settlement was enlarged; more land was bought from the country proprietors, and about seventy Chinese, with several artificers, constituted the establishment. In the month of May two Spanish ships of war arrived in the Sound; for some days they made no hostile attempt, but on the 14th, one of the captains seized an English vessel, conveyed the officers and men on board the Spanish ships, and afterwards sent them prisoners to a Spanish port. He also took possession of the lands and buildings belonging to the new factory, removed the British flag, and declared that all the lands between Cape Horn and the sixtieth degree of north latitude, on the western coast of America, were the undoubted property of the Spanish king. Another vessel was captured afterwards under the same pretence; the crews of both were thrown into prison, and the cargoes were sold for the captors, without the form either of condemnation or judicature. The Spanish ambassador first informed the court of London that the ships had been seized; and at the same time expressed his master's desire, that means might be taken for preventing his Britannic majesty's sub-

Insult offered by Spain.

[u] The statement of the grounds of the dispute is compressed from the memorial of Lieutenant Mears, presented to Mr. Secretary Grenville; which see in State Papers, 1790.

jects

jects from frequenting those coasts, which he alleged to have been previously occupied by the subjects of the catholic king. He also complained of the fisheries carried on by the British subjects in the seas adjoining to the Spanish continent, as being contrary to the rights of the crown of Spain. His Britannic majesty immediately demanded adequate satisfaction to the individuals injured, and to the British nation for the insult which had been offered. The viceroy of Mexico had restored one of the vessels [v], but had not thereby satisfied the nation; on the contrary, the court of Spain professed to give up the ships as a favour, not as a right, and asserted a direct claim to exclusive sovereignty, navigation, and commerce, in the territories, coasts, and seas in that part of the world. His majesty, far from admitting this allegation, made a fresh demand for satisfaction, and having also received intelligence that considerable armaments were equipping in the ports of Spain, he judged it necessary to prepare on his side, for acting with vigour and effect, in supporting the rights and interests of Britain. The message from the king stated the injury and insult, the satisfaction demanded, the reply, the second demand, the subsequent conduct of Spain, and the measures of Britain arising from that conduct: it farther recommended to his faithful commons, to enable him to make such augmentations to his forces as might be eventually necessary. His majesty earnestly wished that the wisdom and equity of the catholic king might render the satisfaction which was unquestionably due, and that this affair might so terminate as to prevent future misunderstanding, continue and confirm harmony and friendship between the two nations, which his

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Satisfaction demanded.

Conduct of Spain.

The king's message to parliament.

[v] The ship and crew (they said) had been released by the viceroy of Mexico, on the supposition, as he declared, that nothing but ignorance of the rights of Spain could have induced the merchants in question to attempt any establishment on that coast.

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majesty would ever endeavour to maintain and improve by all means consistent with the dignity o the crown, and essential interests of his subjects.[w]

THE message being taken into consideration, Mr. Pitt declared, whatever the house must feel on the subject of his majesty's communication, he was too well assured of the public spirit of every member, to conceive that any difference of opinion could arise as to the measures which such circumstances would make it necessary to adopt. From the facts stated in the message, it appeared that British subjects had been forcibly interrupted in a traffic which they had carried on for years without molestation, in parts of America where they had an incontrovertible right of trading, and in places to which no country could claim an exclusive right of commerce and navigation. Ships had been seized, restitution and satisfaction demanded, but without effect; the court of Madrid had advanced a claim to the exclusive rights of navigation in those seas, that was unfounded, exorbitant, and indefinite: in its consequences aiming destruction at our valuable fisheries in the southern ocean, and tending to the annihilation of a commerce, which we were just beginning to carry on to the profit of the country, in hitherto unfrequented parts of the globe; it was therefore necessary and incumbent upon the nation to adopt measures which might in future prevent any such disputes. Much as we wished for peace, we must be prepared for war, if Spain continued to refuse satisfaction for the aggression, and to assert claims totally inconsistent with the rights of independent navigators, to lands which being before unappropriated, they should make their own by occupancy and labour. He therefore moved an address conformable to the message.

ON a subject which involved both the interest

[w] See State Papers, May 25. 1790.

and

and honour of the country, there was but one sentiment in both houses of parliament. No British senator could bear without indignant resentment such an imperious assumption by any foreign power; and in the commons, the first to declare his cordial support was Mr. Fox; he however blamed the minister for having so very lately afforded such a flattering prospect of the continuance of peace, when before that time he had known from the Spanish ambassador, the principal grounds of his majesty's message. It was replied, that this animadversion was founded on a misapprehension of fact: at the period mentioned, government did not know the extent of the Spanish claims, nor the preparations that were carried on in the Spanish ports. An unanimous address was presented by parliament, assuring his majesty of their determination to afford him the most zealous and effectual support for maintaining the dignity of his crown, and the essential interests of his dominions.[x] This address was soon followed by a vote of credit of a million, for the purpose of carrying into effect the warlike preparations that might be necessary. Motions were afterwards made in both houses, for papers that might illustrate the grounds of the dispute, but they were resisted upon an established rule, founded in wise policy, and sanctioned by uniform precedent, that no papers relating to a negotiation with a foreign power should be produced while such negotiation is pending.

Parliament unanimously pledge their support of the king in vindicating the rights of Britain.

On the 10th of June, his majesty closed the session with a speech, in which he acquainted the two houses that he had yet received no satisfactory answer from Madrid, and was therefore under the necessity of continuing to proceed with expedition and vigour in preparations for war; in the prosecution of which he had received the strongest assur-

[x] See State Papers, May 26. 1790.

ances

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ances from his allies, of their determination to fulfil the engagements of the existing treaties. His majesty announced his intention of immediately dissolving the present parliament; and in signifying this determination, he thanked them for the proofs they had given of affectionate and unshaken loyalty to his person; their uniform and zealous regard for the true principles of our invaluable constitution, and their unremitting attention to the happiness and prosperity of the country. In a very concise, but comprehensive and strong summary, his majesty exhibited the effects of their exertions: "The rapid increase (he said) of our manufactures, commerce, and navigation, the additional protection and security afforded to the distant possessions of the empire, the provisions for the good government of India, the improvement of the public revenue, and the establishment of a permanent system for the gradual reduction of the national debt, have furnished the best proofs of your resolution in encountering the difficulties with which you had to contend, and of your steadiness and perseverance in those measures which were best adapted to promote the essential and lasting interests of my dominions." His majesty farther emphatically added, "The loyalty and public spirit, the industry and enterprize of my subjects, have seconded your exertions. On their sense of the advantages which they at present experience, as well as on their uniform and affectionate attachment to my person and government, I rely for the continuance of that harmony and confidence, the happy effects of which have so manifestly appeared during the present parliament, and which must at all times afford the surest means of meeting the exigencies of war, or of cultivating with increasing benefit the blessings of peace." The parliament was dissolved the following day by proclamation.

Dissolution of parliament.

Warlike

THE preparations for maintaining our rights against

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against aggression were carried on with vigour and expedition, proportioned to the resources of so potent a nation. But it being the intention of the British government to avoid hostilities, unless absolutely necessary for the national honour and security, Mr. Fitzherbert was sent to Madrid with full powers to settle the disputes between the Spanish and British nations, in a decisive manner. The grounds of the Spanish claims were set forth in a declaration to all the European courts, dated the 4th of June, 1790 [y], and more specifically detailed in a memorial delivered the 18th of June to Mr. Fitzherbert, the British ambassador. [z] According to these statements, Spain had a prescriptive right to the exclusive navigation, commerce, and property of Spanish America and the Spanish West Indies. The various treaties with England had recognized that right: in the treaty of Utrecht, which was still in force, Spain and England had agreed, that the navigation and commerce of the West Indies, under the dominion of Spain, should remain in the precise situation in which they stood in the reign of his catholic majesty Charles II. It was stipulated that Spain should never grant to any nation permission to trade with her American dominions, nor cede to any other power any part of these territories. [a] These rights extended to Nootka Sound; and though Spain had not planted colonies in every part of these dominions, still they were within the line of demarcation that had been always admitted. On the part of England it was answered [b], that though the treaty of Utrecht, and subsequent conventions, recognized the rights of Spain to her dominions in America, and in the

preparations.

Diplomatic discussion between Britain and Spain.

[y] State Papers, 1790. [z] Ibid.

[a] The object of this stipulation was, to exclude France, which was become so closely connected with Spain, from any share in her American trade or possessions.

[b] State Papers, 1790. Mr. Fitzherbert's answer to the Spanish memorial.

West

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West Indies, to be on the same footing as in the reign of Charles II., and we were still willing to adhere to that recognition, the admission by no means proved that Nootka Sound made part of those territories. By the plainest maxims of jurisprudence, whatever is common belongs to the first occupier; but the right co-extensive with occupancy is by occupancy determined: every nation, like every individual, has a right to appropriate whatever they can acquire without trespassing on the previous appropriations of others. The English had a right to possess as much of the desert coast of America as they could occupy or cultivate. The Spaniards not having established their claims by either occupancy or labour, proved no right to the exclusive property of Nootka Sound. The seizure, therefore, of the British vessels and British effects, was an injury and an insult for which Britain demanded restitution and satisfaction. The language of British justice, demanding what British power could so easily enforce from any aggressor that dared to provoke its vengeance, was represented by Spain as haughty and menacing; and various difficulties occurred before matters were brought to a decision. The Spaniards professed a desire of conciliation, but were really endeavouring to interest the French government in their behalf; and the royal family of France was sufficiently disposed to support the Bourbon compact; but the king had now lost the power of giving effect to this agreement. The national assembly decreed an armament of fourteen ships of the line, but avowedly to protect their own commerce and colonies, and to embrace no measures that were not purely defensive; and this resolution highly gratified the people, who were not then disposed to go to war with England. Though the preparations of Spain were vigorous as far as her power and resources admitted, yet her fleets, consisting of seventy

Spain attempts to interest France.

The French nation is adverse to war with England.

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ships of the line, manned by such sailors as she could collect, was little able to cope with the navy of England, amounting to one hundred and fifty-eight ships of the line, manned by British seamen. Finding no prospect of effectual assistance from France, and conscious of her own inability to contend with England, Spain began to mingle proffers of concession with her former declarations of pacific intention. Mr. Fitzherbert having persisted in his demands, without relaxing the claims, the Spanish court, on the 24th of July, issued a declaration testifying their willingness to comply fully with the demands of his Britannic majesty, by rendering satisfaction and compensation. In order to mitigate to the people of Spain the bitterness of a just concession, extorted by fear, the declaration [c] set forth that his catholic majesty was fully persuaded the king of Britain would act to him in the same manner, under similar circumstances. Mr. Fitzherbert having accepted the declaration, all differences between the courts of Madrid and London were terminated with proper formality and precision, by a convention [d] between his Britannic majesty and the king of Spain, signed at the Escurial, on the 28th of October, 1790. The settlement at Nootka Sound was restored, a full liberty of trade to all the north-west coasts of America, and navigation and fishery in the Southern Pacific were confirmed to England. Both nations were equally restricted from attempting any settlement nearer to Cape Horn than the most southerly plantations already established by Spain. It was agreed, that should any ground of complaint thereafter arise, no violence should be committed, but the case should be reported to the respective courts, who would bring it to an amicable termination.

Spain, hopeless of aid, yields to the demands of Britain.

The disputes are adjusted in a convention.

[c] State Papers, July 24. 1790.
[d] State Papers, October 28. 1790.

THE

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THE declaration of the 24th of July having been received in England, and the result communicated by the duke of Leeds, secretary of state, to the lord mayor, and published in the Gazette extraordinary, afforded great pleasure to the nation; but the convention completed the satisfaction of the people, who deemed it equally honourable and advantageous to Britain; as the minister, without involving the country in a war, had obtained every compensation which justice could demand; and had shewn to other powers, that BRITISH SUBJECTS WERE NOT TO BE MOLESTED WITH IMPUNITY.

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Continental affairs. — Measures of Britain and her allies for counteracting the ambition of Joseph and Catharine. — Poland friendly to the defensive alliance. — Death of Joseph II., emperor of Germany; and character. — Leopold, his successor, moderate and pacific. — He agrees to open a congress at Reichenbach. — Military operations between the Austrians and Turks; bloody but indecisive. — Habitual prepossessions of Kaunitz and Hertsberg. — Liberal and wise policy of Britain, and ability of Ewart. — Peace between Austria and Turkey, under the guarantee of the defensive alliance. — Operations between Russia and Turkey. — Siege of Ismail. — Desperately valiant defence. — Stormed. — Cruel and dreadful slaughter. — Campaign between Sweden and Prussia. — Peace between Russia and Sweden. — State of affairs in the Netherlands. — Rise of a democratical spirit. — Its votaries propose to subvert the constituted authorities. — Contests between the aristocratical and democratical revolutionists. — Leopold proposes to avail himself of their dissensions. — He offers to redress their real grievances, but vindicates his right to the sovereignty. — Britain and her allies mediate between the Flemings and Leopold. — Under their guarantee the Netherlands are restored to their ancient privileges. — They obtain further concessions from Leopold. — They find their security in their ancient mixed government. — Proceedings of the French revolutionists in forming the new constitution. — Qualification of active citizens. — Preclude universal suffrage. — Division into departments. — New and comprehensive principle of financial legislation. — Confiscation of clerical property. — Civic oath. — Scheme for converting the spoils of the clergy into ready money. — Boundless power of the mob. — The multitude, civil and military, destitute of religion. — Mixture of ridiculous levity and serious iniquity. — Anarchasis Cloots ambassador from the whole human race. — Abolition of titles and hereditary nobility. — Summary of changes within

within the year. — Anniversary celebration of the 14th of July in the Field of Mars. — Federal oath. — Violent proceedings against those who refused it. — Britain. — The French revolution is better understood. — Mr. Pitt and his friends forbear discussion of its merits. — Majority of literary men favour the new system; though they censure its excesses. — Sentiments of Mr. Fox. — The clergy are alarmed by the infidelity and confiscation of the revolutionary system. — Burke's work on the subject — effects. — General election.

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Continental affairs.

WHILE Britain was thus successfully employed in securing the blessings of peace to herself, she was desirous of also extending them to others. The grand scheme of confederacy which was formed by Kaunitz for uniting the great continental powers, had been discomfited by the co-operating talents of William Pitt the English minister, and Frederic the Prussian king. The alliance having since been renewed between the two empires, and endangering the balance of power, had stimulated the son of Pitt, and Frederic's counsellors, to form a new plan of defensive confederation, to counteract the ambitious designs of Russia and Austria.[a] Their project was so extended as to embrace all those states which were likely to be affected by the imperial aggressors. Poland, Sweden, and Turkey, were equally interested in forming a part of this confederacy. Mr. Ewart, British ambassador at Berlin, a man of great abilities, and extensive political knowledge, having attained very considerable influence with the Prussian court, employed it in promoting the purposes of the defensive alliance. This minister, viewing the situation and productiveness of Poland, saw that it might be rendered the source of immense political benefit to the confederacy, and might ultimately produce important commercial advantages to Great Britain. Poland might

Measures of Britain and her allies for counteracting the ambition of Joseph and Catharine.

[a] Segur's History of Frederic William, vol. ii. p. 136.

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be rendered a formidable barrier to the designs of Russia; and the acquisitions which Prussia might obtain by another dismemberment of Poland, would not contribute so essentially to her security as the independence of the Polish monarchy; it was, therefore, the interest of Prussia to support and strengthen that neighbour.[b] The Poles themselves were made sensible that it would be mutually beneficial to Prussia and their country to be closely connected. Having long nourished the most indignant resentment against the Russians, their rage was recently inflamed by the insolence of the imperial confederates, who, without asking their consent, had stationed large bodies of troops in their territories, and even urged them to enter into an alliance against Turkey, a power which had been always friendly to Poland; induced by these considerations, they readily acceded to the defensive union, and made vigorous preparations. This confederacy, when joined to the belligerent opposers of the two empires, constituted a sextuple[c] alliance, comprehending Great Britain, Prussia, Holland, Sweden, Poland, and Turkey. Its first and principal object was to save the Ottoman empire from the grasp of the imperial confederates; and to afford to the contracting parties reciprocal protection from the boundless ambition of the combined aggressors. Not only to liberate Poland from its subjection to Catharine, but to draw to the English ports the numerous productions, naval and commercial, of that extensive and fertile country, formed a secondary, but essential, object of British policy. As negociation was the first purpose of the powers which were not actually engaged, they made overtures for a congress, which, though rejected by Russia, they, from a recent change in

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Poland friendly to the defensive alliance.

[b] Otridge's Annual Register, 1791. — Segur, vol. ii. *passim*.
[c] Otridge's Annual Register, 1791, chap. i.

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1790.

Death of Joseph II. emperor of Germany;

the sovereignty of Austria, expected to meet with a more favourable reception from that power.

JOSEPH II. emperor of Germany, whose life had been chiefly distinguished for extent and variety of project terminating in disappointment, had long laboured under bodily distemper; if not caused in its origin, increased in its operation, and accelerated in its effects, by the distresses of a mind impatient of crosses encountered from its own injustice, precipitancy, and folly. The gleam of success from Turkey was soon forgotten in the gloomy prospect which opened from the Netherlands. The unbounded spirit of reform had produced subversion; the attempt to govern without controul had, in the most valuable part of his dominions, left him no subjects to command. In Hungary also, his innovations generated discontent, discontent demands of redress; demands of redress were first haughtily refused, but at length extorted concession. Indeed, his imperious severity appeared softened, and his ambition weakened as he approached that period when earthly power and glory could no longer avail. In his last illness, he sought consolation in that religion which for so great a part of his life he had disregarded, and learned on his death-bed, how absurd and pernicious the attempt was to suppress in his subjects that principle which only could restrain turbulent passion, and heal a wounded breast. In the languor of illness, and the awful hour of dissolution, he saw that his policy had been as unwise as unjust; and that disgrace and disaster awaits the prince who attempts to enslave a free and gallant people. Being now weaned from the ambition which had so much agitated his life, he acquired tranquillity, and preserved it to the last. On the 20th of February he expired, in the forty-ninth year of his age, the twenty-fifth of his imperial reign as the successor of his father,

and

and the ninth of his sovereignty over the Austrian dominions as the heir of his mother. CHAP. XLV.

1790. and character.

Joseph II. was by nature ardent in spirit, active in disposition, and fond of distinction. His situation cherished in such a mind the love of power which he had so much the means of gratifying. With lively feeling, but without strength of understanding and originality of genius, in his objects and undertakings he was the creature of imitation. From the splendor of Frederic's character, his illustrious exploits, and his immense improvement of his dominions, as well as the vicinity of their situation, and personal and political intercourse, he chose for a model the Prussian king, without discrimination to understand the peculiar features of his supposed archetype; acuteness to discern the principles and rules of that monarch's conduct, or compass of mind to comprehend the general system of his measures and actions. He also was an admiring imitator of Catharine, and supposed himself the confident of her counsels when he was only the tool of her schemes. From both he copied infidelity [q], but did not copy from them that prudent policy which cherished religion in their subjects, adapted themselves in appearance to the popular prepossessions, and made their respective churches engines of state. He imitated their ambitious projects without possessing the wisdom of plan, or the consistent and well-directed vigour of execution, which accomplished their designs. Springing from a variety of causes, and encouraged to a certain extent by these sovereigns, there prevailed in Europe a great disposition to reform. Frederic clearly apprehending what was right or wrong, innovated wherever change was improvement. Joseph was a reformist because innovation was the favourite pursuit of the times; and on the same principles by which private

[q] See Abbé Barruel, vol. i.

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votaries of some favourite fashion are often actuated, sought distinction by being a leader of the reigning mode, without considering how far it was wise, prudent, or suited to the circumstances in which he was placed. His pursuit of reform being neither accommodated to the habits nor to the sentiments of its objects, was the primary end of his conduct; and from the violence of his temper, and the total want of moderation, the principal source of his manifold disasters. In his wars, as well as his internal politics, Joseph was a factitious and imitative character. Without military talents or inclinations, without well-founded prospects of advantage, he appears to have sought hostilities from the desire of rivalling his warlike neighbours. Joseph's misfortunes arose entirely from his incapacity of directing himself, and from not being counselled by able and upright men. Without sound judgment himself, he wanted wise and faithful advisers[e] to oppose projects which were evidently hurtful to the projector. Qualities apparently contrary, indecision with precipitation, obstinacy with fickleness and inconstancy, openness, and benignity of manner and countenance, with duplicity and faithlessness, arose from the same source; an understanding which judged without examination; and a will directed by temporary impulse, without any fixed principles of conduct. The character of Joseph, from his condition, was very conspicuous in its operation, and very pernicious in its effects; but instead of being, as has been often represented, *singular*, is, in its springs and constituents, EXTREMELY COMMON. Whoever observes, in private life, vivacity of fancy without soundness of judgment; ardour of disposition and eagerness of pursuit, without just appreciation of

[e] The ruling principle of Kaunitz being the elevation of the house of Austria, successful as he had been as the counsellor of the prudent Maria Theresa, yet he soothed and abetted the impetuous Joseph, in projects that eventually tended to its depression.

end,

end, or skilful selection of means; emulation in mere fashion; multiplicity of project formed without wisdom, and carried on without constancy, beholds, in a confined scene, the same character exhibited which the world contemplated on the great European theatre, performed by Joseph II. emperor of Germany.

Leopold, his successor, moderate and pacific.

JOSEPH was succeeded by his brother Leopold, grand duke of Tuscany, a prince of a very different character. Accustomed to the pleasurable regions of Italy, and the enervating refinement of Italian manners, Leopold, presiding at Florence, was chiefly distinguished for luxurious softness; and having no incentives to war, or opportunities of ambition, was habitually pacific, and actually indolent. Both from nature and circumstances, and perhaps also from contemplating the effects of his brother's violence, he was remarkable for moderation. When, instead of being an Italian prince, he became head of the house of Austria, he demonstrated that his apparent indolence arose from the want of motives to action, and not from an inherent inertness of character; he showed himself firm and efficient, but retained his moderation and pacific disposition; and though he did not possess superior talents, was, by his mixed steadiness and prudence[f], well qualified to remedy the evils which had proceeded from the capricious and violent Joseph. Averse himself from war as an *adventure of ambition*, he saw, in the circumstances of his affairs, and his relation to foreign powers, strong reasons for promoting his disposition to peace. He was involved in hostilities with his own subjects: at variance with the principal electors, he was in danger of being excluded from the imperial throne: the conquests on the desolated borders of Turkey, ob-

[f] See Otridge's Annual Register for 1791 and 1792, *passim*; also Segur, vol. ii.

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tained at an immense expense, were of little value. The supplies for carrying on the war had lost, in the Netherlands, their most productive source. A hundred thousand disciplined Prussians hovered over the frontiers of Bohemia, while three other armies were prepared to act in different quarters. England would pour her wealth, and Prussia her troops, to support the revolted Netherlands. From war Austria had little to gain, and much to lose. For these reasons Leopold was disposed to pacification, and acceded to a proposal for opening a congress at Reichenbach in Silesia. Meanwhile the campaign was opened on the frontiers of Turkey. Selim, to compensate the impolicy, and consequent losses of the former year, chose for his vizier Hassan Aly, a man of great ability. The Turks, who imputed the adverse events of the last campaign to the misconduct of the late vizier, were ready and eager to renew the contest, and a great army was prepared. The sultan spared no aid, which superstition could afford, to inspirit his troops. He clad them in black, to denote their readiness to meet death in defence of their cause; and, in concurrence with his chief priests, proclaimed a remission of their sins to all who should die in battle: these incentives, co-operating with the native valour of the Turks, early in the season he had four hundred thousand men ready to take the field. The campaign on the Danube was opened by the capture of Orsova, which having been blockaded during the whole winter by the Austrians, was suddenly reduced through the misapprehension of the garrison. The Turks conceiving a shock of an earthquake to be the explosion of a mine, were struck with a panic, and supposing themselves about to be blown up, immediately surrendered. A detachment of the Austrians besieged Guirgewo, but the Ottomans, resuming their wonted courage, marched to its relief. Encountering the Austrians they fought with the

He agrees to open a congress at Reichenbach.

Military operations between the Austrians and Turks;

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the most desperate valour, threw those brave and disciplined troops into confusion, and defeated them with the loss of three thousand men. Among the killed was Count Thorn the general, whose head the Turks, agreeably to the custom of those ferocious barbarians, displayed in triumph through the army. This was the last act of hostilities carried on between the Turks and the Austrians.

bloody, but indecisive.

At Reichenbach the ambition of Kaunitz, which, for forty years, had been chiefly directed to aggrandise the house of Austria, still entertained hopes of acquiring advantages from the Russian confederacy, and the prosecution of the Turkish war, and was averse to the peace. Count Hertsberg, the Prussian minister, formed under Frederic, and considering every maxim of that illustrious monarch's policy as the rule of conduct, without adverting to the change of circumstances, desired to attack Austria when weak and exhausted; dispossess her of the rest of Silesia, abet the revolt in the Netherlands, and prevent the elevation of Leopold to the imperial throne. A more comprehensive and liberal policy, however, originating in the wise councils of Britain, and urged by Mr. Ewart, inculcated the necessity of sacrificing hereditary enmity to solid interest, and influenced the Prussian king. Leopold being no less disposed to conciliation, tranquillity was, without difficulty, established; and on the 27th of July a convention was concluded. The king of Hungary agreed to open a negociation for peace, on the basis of reciprocal restitution under the umpirage of the defensive alliance.[s] The empress of Russia was to be invited to accede to these conditions; but if she should refuse, Leopold was to observe a perfect neutrality between the contending potentates. The

Habitual prepossessions of Kaunitz and Hertsberg.

Liberal and wise policy of Britain, and ability of Ewart.

Peace between Austria and Turkey, under the guarantee

[s] Segur, who shews himself well aquainted with continental politics, betrays gross ignorance of the views of Britain, when he deems this league to spring from offensive ambition. See vol. ii. chap. i.

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king of Prussia would co-operate with the maritime powers to allay the troubles in the Low Countries, and restore them to the Austrian dominions, on condition that their ancient privileges and constitution were re-established. The English and Dutch ministers engaged in behalf of the respective courts, to guarantee those stipulations; and an armistice for nine months was, not long after, concluded between Leopold and the Turks, which, notwithstanding various obstacles, arising from the artifices of Catharine, terminated in a peace. The war between Russia and Turkey was this year languid in its operations, as Catharine's attention was chiefly directed to the congress in Silesia, and also to schemes of policy in various quarters: some desultory engagements took place, both by land and on the Black Sea, but without any important event. To facilitate her favourite objects of driving the Turks from Europe, and raising her grandson to the Byzantine throne, the empress persevered in a plan of detaching the Greek subjects of Turkey from their obedience. By her encouragement, and pecuniary assistance, a rebellion was fomented in Albania: the leader of the insurgents defeated a Turkish governor; and acquired such power and confidence as to form a regular and extensive plan for emancipating themselves from the Turkish yoke, and offering the sovereignty of Greece to the Russian prince. A memorial[h], not unworthy of the descendants of ancient Greeks, stating both the object and plan, was presented to Catharine, and very graciously received; but before it could be matured, Russia had been induced, if not to relinquish, to postpone, her plan of subjugating Turkey. It was the latter end of autumn before Prince Potemkin was in motion: his tardy commencement of the campaign was not without policy

Operations between Russia and Turkey.

[h] The reader will find a translation of this ingenious and eloquent performance in Otridge's Annual Register for 1791, page 278.

and

and design. The Russian troops, inured to the colds of the north, were much less adapted to the summer heats even of their own southern frontiers. CHAP. XLV. 1790.

The Asiatic Turks, on the contrary, could easily bear the solstitial season in countries so much colder than their own as the banks of the Danube and the confines of Tartary; but even the autumnal cold of those countries they could not endure; and on the approach of winter it was their uniform practice to leave the army, and return to warmer latitudes. Potemkin, knowing the number and valour of those troops, deferred his military operations until they had taken their departure. His plan was, first to reduce Ismail, then Braicklow, which would complete the Russian conquest to the Danube; passing that river, to place himself between the Turkish army and Constantinople; and thus compel the vizier either to risk an engagement, or to accept of a peace on terms prescribed by Russia. Abandoned by the Asiatics, the Turkish army did not exceed forty thousand men. Dissensions and conspiracies prevailed in Constantinople, and the affairs of the Turks were in the most critical and dangerous state; but the Divan, unbroken by these distressing circumstances, had resolved to maintain the Ottoman independence to the last extremity; and for the accomplishment of his purpose, Selim, trusting not only to the resources which still remained, but to the vigorous mediation of the defensive alliance, cherished and supported the firmness of his council. The town of Ismail had always been deemed the key of the lower Danube: it was surrounded by two walls, covered by their respective ditches, of considerable depth and breadth, and capable of being filled with the waters of the Danube. A select and numerous garrison had been early appointed, with an artillery amounting to more than three hundred pieces, and lately reinforced by thirty thousand men. The

Siege of Ismail.

Russian

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Russian forces on the Danube were formed into three divisions; one commanded by prince Potemkin, a second by prince Repnin, the third by general Suwaroff. To this last body, covered and supported by the two others, the siege of Ismail was entrusted. Suwaroff surrounded the place with batteries constructed on every spot of ground which would answer the purpose; and these were loaded with forges for heating the balls, with the heaviest battering artillery and mortars, and every other engine of destruction hitherto invented. On the 22d of December the besiegers made a general assault in eight columns: the Turks received them with intrepid valour. Five times were the Russians repulsed: five times they renewed the attack; and at the last onset were discomfited with a slaughter which seemed to render all farther effort hopeless. The besiegers now began to think of nothing but to sell their lives as dearly as possible, when Suwaroff having dismounted his cavalry to supply the slain infantry, snatched a standard, and running up a scaling ladder, planted it with his own hand on a Turkish battery. Re-animated to enthusiasm by the personal prowess of their general, the Russians not only withstood the attack of the pursuing enemy, but repulsed them, and again became the assailants. The Turks disputed every inch of ground; but the Russians being reinforced by fresh troops from the covering armies, by numbers overpowered the valiant defenders of Ismail; carried post after post till they reduced the whole. With the fury of enraged barbarians, they effected a merciless, horrid, and undistinguishing slaughter, which spared neither age nor sex. The annals of Attila or of Genseric, in the benighted ages of northern Europe, furnish no record of savage butchery which surpasses the carnage at Ismail, by troops employed according to their mistress's professions, to expel barbarism from this quarter of the globe,

Desperately valiant defence.

Stormed.

Cruel and dreadful slaughter.

and instead of the bloody superstition of Mahomed, to establish the mild and peaceful religion of the meek and benevolent Jesus: such was the Russian mode of making converts to the Greek church, and extending christianity. The inflexible endurance of the vanquished was as great as the inflicting cruelty of the conquerors; as the Russians would give; the Turks would receive no quarter: they either rushed on the bayonet, plunged into the Danube, or sought death by some means equally efficacious. Twenty-four thousand of the Turkish soldiers perished in this bloody contest: the governor of Ismail was found covered with wounds; the whole number of massacred Turks, including inhabitants of all ages, sexes, and conditions, amounted nearly to thirty-one thousand.[k] The slain on the side of the Russians exceeded ten thousand men, among whom were many of their officers.

Campaign between Sweden and Russia.

The king of Sweden, having entirely conciliated the affections of his people, and excited their admiration, by his conduct in the preceding year, was, through their unanimous efforts, enabled to open the campaign of 1790 early in the season. In the beginning of April, putting himself at the head of three thousand forces in Finland, he penetrated into the Savalax, a district of Russia not far from Wiborg. Alarmed by the approach of the enemy within a hundred miles of Petersburgh, Catharine sent ten thousand troops to obstruct his progress. They found their enemy entrenched in a very strong position. Trusting to their superior numbers, the Russians attacked the Swedish lines; but the

[i] The suffering fortitude of the Turks illustrates the very ingenious reasoning of Dr. Smith, in his Theory of Moral Sentiments, wherein he accounts for the unconquerable firmness of savages.

[k] About three hundred Circassian women, consisting partly of those belonging to the governor's haram, and partly of others who had fled thither for refuge from other harams, were preserved and protected by an English gentleman, in the Russian service, Colonel Cobley, who commanded the dismounted cavalry, when they were on the point of throwing themselves into the Danube to escape violation from the Cossack and Russian soldiers. See Otridge's Annual Register for 1791, page 101.

Cool

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cool intrepid courage of the Swedes, headed by the personal valour and genius of their sovereign, repelled the attack: it was soon, however, renewed by the impulse of national pride, rivalry, indignation, and shame of being defeated by such a handful men. The engagement, for about two hours, was most desperate, obstinate, and bloody; but rage, fury, and superior numbers, gave way, at last, to calm and determined valour. The Russians left about two thousand dead upon the spot, and Gustavus, encouraged by this success, advanced farther into Russia. Meanwhile, the fleet under the duke of Sudermania sailed up the gulph of Finland. The prince projected the destruction of the Russian squadron lying in the port of Revel, the great naval arsenal, along with its docks and magazines. The ships were, eleven of the line, three of which carried a hundred guns each, and five frigates; and they were protected by numerous batteries. The Swedish fleet, notwithstanding all these obstacles, on the 13th of May penetrated into the harbour, and in the midst of the hostile fire, maintained for four hours a doubtful conflict; but towards the evening a violent storm arose, which obliged the Swedes to retreat. They afterwards fell in with a Russian fleet from Cronstadt, and an engagement ensued, in which the Swedes at first appeared superior, when night intervening interrupted the contest. The next day battle being renewed, while the Swedish fleet was engaged with the enemy in front, the squadron from Revel appearing in the rear, the duke was in extreme danger of being surrounded, but by judicious manœuvres and bold exertions, assisted by a favourable wind, he extricated himself from the danger, and joined his royal brother not far from Wiborg. Against this city the land and naval force of Sweden directed their efforts; but while they were making dispositions for the purpose, the Russian fleet

fleet came in sight. The Swedes were now hemmed in between the united squadrons of Russia and the garrison of Wiborg. His majesty and his army were accompanied by a fleet of gallies, which were likewise enclosed; the only alternative, therefore, was, to force their way through the enemy or to surrender: the former was of course chosen: they effected their escape, but not without incurring very great loss of ships and troops, that were either taken or sunk: the whole number of men either killed or captured, amounted to seven thousand. The genius of Gustavus, stimulated by difficulty, soon refitted his shattered fleet, and recruited his diminished army. On the 9th of July, with his armament, he encountered a large Russian fleet, commanding his own squadron in person, he immediately offered them battle, and conducted his operations with such masterly skill, that, after a very obstinate conflict, he gained a decisive victory. The loss of the Russians amounted to four thousand five hundred prisoners, and nearly as many killed and wounded. This defeat astonished and alarmed Catharine: in the great talents of Gustavus, she was at last convinced, she had to encounter a formidable foe, which she had not apprehended in a contest with Sweden. Such an antagonist was not to be subdued either by overwhelming numbers, or the adversity of fortune. Being now abandoned by the Austrians, and threatened by the English and Prussians, she saw her projects respecting Turkey had little chance of being accomplished, if she continued at war with Sweden: she therefore directed the chief efforts of her policy to the attainment of a peace; she accordingly signified to Gustavus a pacific disposition. The Swedish king, finding his country greatly exhausted by her extraordinary efforts, and not doubting that the defensive alliance would repress the ambitious projects of Russia as far as general security required,

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required, was not averse to these overtures of amity. Neither Catharine nor Gustavus communicated to their allies their pacific intentions, but concluded between themselves an armistice, which, in the middle of August, terminated in a peace.

1790. Peace between Russia and Sweden.

FREED from a Turkish war, Leopold had leisure to turn his chief attention to the affairs of the Netherlands. The Flemings had begun their opposition to Joseph from a desire of preserving existing establishments. They limited their wishes and designs to the maintenance of that constitutional liberty, which they inherited from their ancestors. Their principle of conduct was totally different from that of the French. Dislike of innovation, ecclesiastical, civil, and political, was the leading feature of the Flemish character at the time they renounced their allegiance to Joseph of Austria. But the vicinity of the Netherlands to France produced a close intercourse between the two countries, and opened the way to the French doctrines, which various causes now co-operated to disseminate. Since the revolt the States General had exercised the supreme authority: the composition of that body was, in a considerable degree, aristocratical; as the states of the nobility and clergy had a greater share in the representation than the commons: this inequality was very soon remarked by the members of the third estate, and strongly reprobated by those who either had imbibed democratical notions; or from ambition, by raising the commons proposed to aggrandise themselves. So early as January, 1790, a number of individuals, professing such sentiments, formed themselves into an association, which they called a patriotic assembly. After passing various resolutions of partial and subordinate reform, they framed a general and comprehensive system of revolution, which, subscribed by two thousand persons, they published as an address to the states, in the name of the people.

State of affairs in the Netherlands.

Rise of a democratical spirit.

people. They therein decreed the permanent exercise of sovereign authority, an aristocratical despotism, equally contrary to the rights of the people as the imperial tyranny of Joseph. The States General they allowed, with propriety, exercised the sovereign power on the *dismission* of the emperor, and the declared independence of the Belgic provinces. But this authority, arising from a temporary cause, could only endure until a legitimate constitution, formed and ratified by the people, could be established. The ancient constitution of the Austrian Netherlands was no more. It fell by the stroke that cut off its head Joseph II. of Austria, representative of the dukes of Burgundy, in whom the functions of the other branches of the legislature centered: they were not original and absolute, but relative and conditional. The States General were therefore responsible to the people for all which they had done since the deposition of the emperor: a national assembly only could insure tranquillity and security to the commonwealth. These principles and claims were very offensive to the two higher orders, as they were totally inimical to the power which they wished to retain without controul. Knowing the influence of the parish priests among the people, they attempted to employ these in persuading their respective parishioners to sign a counter-address, requesting the states to seize and punish all those disturbers who wished to introduce innovations in their religion and constitution. Those clergymen, however, connected by the closest intimacy and friendship with their flocks, were by no means zealous and active in recommending a measure so very unpopular. The states farther endeavoured to prevent the sentiments which they wished to inculcate from being counteracted through the press. They issued a decree, that this great engine of public opinion should be limited to the same restrictions

Its votaries propose to subvert all the constituted authorities.

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strictions as under the sovereignty of the emperor; that all literary works should be subject to the scrutiny of censors, before they were republished; and that all publishers should be responsible for the contents of the books which they presented to the world. These attempts to restrain the actions, and even controul the thoughts, of the people, gave great dissatisfaction to those who wished for a larger portion of democracy in the constitution. The two higher orders, joined by a common opposition to the democratical schemes, formed one party, while the third, and all those who were inimical to privileged orders, formed another party. The nobility, on their side, possessed great inheritances, and were reverenced on account of their ancient families, and many of them highly esteemed for their personal characters: but the clergy, in a country distinguished for extreme bigotry, possessed peculiar influence: these circumstances prevented democratic turbulence from rising to the pitch which it would have otherwise attained. But the discontented restlessness of innovation soon triumphed in the minds of the populace over the submissive acquiescence of superstition. The higher orders attempted to awe the multitude by force, but soon found that here, as in France, the army had embraced the popular side. The commander of the Flemish troops was general Vandermersch, who, after having long served under the emperor, on the first dawnings of the revolution had returned to his native country. This gentleman was distinguished for his military talents and recent successes: he embraced the popular side, and spread his sentiments through the army. In March an attempt was made by the aristocratical party to remove the commander from his office, and deputies were sent by the states for this purpose. In this situation the general adopted very bold measures: being nominated by the army commander in chief of the Belgic

Contests between the aristocratical and democratical revolutionists.

Belgic forces, in defiance of the states, he ordered the deputies to be committed to prison. He issued a proclamation, declaring that he was placed at the head of an army for the purpose of defending the civil and religious rights of the people, which he was determined to protect from all invasion. Officers of similar sentiments were placed at the head of the war departments; and next to Vandermersch in the command of the army were the duke of Ursel and the prince of Arenberg. The states ordered the troops which were stationed at Brussels to march against the general. A civil war appeared on the eve of commencement between the aristocratic and democratic parties; but the army, by some sudden impulse of passion, the causes of which have never been ascertained, abandoned that general whom they had so highly valued and recently exalted, and gave him up to the rage of his enemies. The congress of the states at this time was chiefly directed by Vandernoot and Van Eupen; the former a lay nobleman, the latter an ecclesiastic. Under their direction, charges were drawn up against the general; and also against the duke of Ursel, hereditary chief of the nobles in Brabant, a man of large fortune and popular character. Vandermersch was doomed to a dungeon at Antwerp: Ursel was arrested and confined for five weeks, without any form of justice: but being tried and acquitted, he was still retained in confinement until a strong body of volunteers forcibly rescued him from this tyranny. These unjust and violent proceedings of the aristocratic party excited the severest reprobation of their adversaries. Priests and feudal tyrants (they said) had seized the sceptre and sword, and used them as instruments of injustice and cruelty against the most patriotic and exalted characters.

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A GOVERNMENT which had, in a few months from its formation, manifested such discord, was

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not likely to be permanent. The army having lost its honour as well as its general, became disheartened, and was now not unfrequently defeated. Great supplies were wanted for maintaining and paying the troops; but the congress had so disgusted the principal cities, that their applications for a loan were totally unsuccessful. Attempts were made in Holland and in England, but to no purpose; and it was evident that the Belgic states were every day, from their internal dissensions, becoming weaker in power, and less important in the estimation of foreign countries.

Leopold prepares to avail himself of their dissensions.

He offers to redress their real grievances, but vindicates his right to the sovereignty.

Leopold, aware of these circumstances, sent a memorial to the people of the Netherlands, which professed sincere regret for the despotic proceedings of the Austrian government; and declared the disposition of the prince to redress all their real grievances, but vindicated his undoubted right to the sovereignty of the Netherlands, and announced his resolution to maintain his claim. This address, together with the situation of affairs, revived the loyalists, or friends of the house of Austria; who, before overawed by the prevailing power, had made no efforts to resist. As the folly and violence of the present government became more evident and more hateful, this party increased: many moderate men, who had at first favoured the revolution, compared the present miserable situation with the tranquillity and contentment enjoyed under Maria Teresa. A coalition of priests and nobles (they observed) was formed, obviously for the purposes of self-interest and ambition. If the States General should continue to govern, the Belgic nation must groan under a two-fold aristocracy. If a republic were attempted on democratical principles, the first probable consequence would be anarchy; which, after producing all its horrible evils, would terminate in a single despotism. An hereditary monarchy, properly limited and modified, appeared most suitable to the character

character and habits of the Flemings. These considerations induced many considerate men to favour a reconciliation with Leopold. The populace, without examining matters so deeply, but actuated by the impulse of resentment and indignation, against the usurpers of sovereignty, very readily joined the loyalists. That party now displayed a force which, even without the assistance of Austrian troops, was formidable and rapidly increasing. The king of Prussia, intimating that he had acknowledged Leopold as duke of Brabant, the aristocratical party saw their hopes of foreign assistance totally vanished, whilst their internal power was fast declining: Leopold, now emperor of Germany, immediately after his coronation, issued a manifesto, engaging himself, under an inaugural oath, and the guarantee of Britain, Prussia, and the United Provinces, to govern the Belgic Netherlands according to the constitution, charters, and privileges, which were in force during the reign of Maria Teresa. He offered a general amnesty to all who, before the 1st of November, should return to their duty. The mediating powers notified to the Belgic states their approval of these terms; but that body still refused to acquiesce, and published a counter-manifesto, denying Leopold's right to the sovereignty of that country, derived from his ancestors; and asserted, that though many of them had enjoyed the sovereignty of the Netherlands, they owed it entirely to the free choice of the people, who had a right to choose for their governors whomsoever they pleased. This doctrine, inimical to hereditary right, and favourable to popular election of sovereigns, combined with their enmity to monarchical power, to bring back the democratical party to some concert with the other revolutionists. The congress used various endeavours to animate the people to a general combination, but without effect. Willing to catch at

Britain and her allies mediate between the Flemings and Leopold.

Under their guarantee the Netherlanders are restored to their ancient privileges.

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every twig to save their sinking power, they proposed to confer the sovereignty on the archduke Charles of Austria, and his heirs of that family, but with the perpetual exclusion of its head: these terms were rejected. Various engagements, uniformly unsuccessful, intimated that resistance was hopeless. The allied powers represented to them the futility of their efforts, and in its uselessness the cruelty of their warfare. The Austrian troops pressed on all sides, the Flemish people without exception acknowledged the authority of the Austrian prince, heir and representative of their ancient rulers. The members of the congress, and other leading partisans of the revolt, apprehending severe resentment from the emperor, especially after the refusal of his recent offers, sought safety in flight. The Austrians used their success with wise moderation; the general, by observing the strictest discipline among his victorious troops, protected the persons and property of all men. In a convention guaranteed by the defensive alliance, and executed at the Hague, the 10th of December, 1790, the Belgic provinces were not only restored to the rights and privileges which they enjoyed at the death of Maria Teresa, but obtained several advantages tending to render them more secure in the enjoyment of their ancient constitution. Thus the Catholic Netherlands having with reason and justice, to preserve their constitutional rights, resisted Joseph's tyranny, after they had experienced within two years despotical oppression, aristocratic usurpation, and democratic violence, at last found refuge and tranquillity in the mixed government that had descended to them from their ancestors.

They obtain further concessions from Leopold.

They find their security in their ancient mixed government.

WE left the national assembly on the establishment of some degree of tranquillity, proceeding in the formation of the new constitution. Operose as this object must have appeared to persons who intended to frame a system of legislation on principles justified

Proceedings of the French revolutionists in forming the new constitution.

justified by experience, a knowledge of human nature, and an accurate acquaintance with the character of the people for whom the constitution was intended, these revolutionists found the attainment of their purpose neither tedious nor difficult. Their system was free from complexity; equality was to be the basis of the polity to be formed; the means were simple and expeditious, perseverance in the course which they had so effectually begun, by reducing every inequality. In the application of this simple maxim they struck a very effectual blow, by a decree, announcing that there was no longer any distinction of orders in France, and thus crushed the nobility and clergy. Having equalized rank, the next business was to model elections agreeably to this new system. The choice of representatives was ultimately vested in primary assemblies, composed of men to be distinguished by the appellation of active citizens. The activity was to consist in contributing to the public exigencies an annual sum not less than half-a-crown. By requiring this qualification in electors, they contravened their own principles of equality, and precluded universal suffrage; they excluded from legislation beggars and many other citizens, not only effectually active in their respective vocations, but active by their tumults in the streets and galleries, in controuling the national assembly itself. It farther debarred from the legislation the deliberative wisdom of fish-women and prostitutes, whose executorial efforts had so powerfully promoted the revolutionary schemes. The primary assemblies, constituted with these exceptions to equality, were to chuse electoral assemblies; the electoral assemblies delegates to the legislative, judges, and executive administrators. That no vestige of antiquity might remain, they proceeded in the abolition of provincial distinctions; and dividing the whole kingdom into eighty-three departments, consoli-

Qualifications of active citizens, precludes universal suffrage.

Division into departments.

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dated the diversities into one mass: as a geographical arrangement, this change was executed with great skill and ability, the departments chiefly took their names from mountains, rivers, and seas, which shape and bound countries; and as a political alteration, it certainly tended to render the government more uniform. A plan was established of municipal jurisdictions, to constitute a fourth assembly, to be chosen by the same electoral assembly which, constituted by the primary, appointed the members of the legislature. Financial legislation next occupying their attention, they began this branch of politics, as they had begun others, by establishing a simple and comprehensive principle, which would apply to every possible case. They enunciated a theorem totally new in jurisprudence, that *all property belongs to the nation*. Having declared their sovereign power over property, the next question was, how private and corporate wealth was to be forth-coming. They saw it would be prudent to augment the pay of the army which was so very serviceable to the revolutionists, and which would become more and more attached to systems of confiscation, by sharing in the proceeds. There were many and numerous demands upon the public, and it was farther expedient to have a governmental bank, which would be able to accommodate the nation by advances, but a capital was wanting. Whatever their lawgivers were in wisdom and virtue, they certainly manifested the national ingenuity in fertile invention and prompt expedient. They soon discovered a very efficient fund for the exigency, in the landed estates of the clergy; some politicians opposed the seizure of clerical property, not as unjust, because they knew its justice had been already established in the new code of ethics; but as impolitic. The appropriation would enrage the clergy, who still retained great influence among the less enlightened people;

New and comprehensive principle of financial legislation.

people; and would also displease and alarm foreign powers, who might not only reprobate a confiscation, but dread the principle; these admonitions however were of little avail. A decree was passed declaring the ecclesiastical estates to be at the disposal of the nation. The clergy expostulated on the robbery, and excited great discontents among their votaries, which were farther increased by the nobility indignant at their own degradation. To counteract the growing disaffection, the assembly spread reports of plots and conspiracies, and thus, by alarming their fears, diverted the attention of the people from the iniquities of government. Rumours were spread, that the princes were now in exile at Turin, and the aristocrats, both in and out of the kingdom, were confederating with foreign princes to effect a counter-revolution. Aware that the king was considered by their adversaries as prisoner, and that his acts could in that supposition be no longer binding than the compulsion lasted, they endeavoured to procure from him an approbation of their proceedings, which should appear voluntary; they attempted to prevail on his mild and compliant disposition, to come to the assembly and explicitly declare himself the head of the revolution, and satisfied with all their proceedings; but this application his majesty resolutely refused. Finding the king inflexible, the republicans disseminated reports of new plots and conspiracies, for rescuing Louis from his present situation. To deter aristocrats and loyalists from such an attempt, it was very frequently declared in common conversation, and in the clubs, that an endeavour to extricate the king would certainly produce his death. The queen was very openly and loudly threatened as the instigator of his majesty's refusal; the benignant Louis from tenderness for his wife and children was induced to make a concession, which no apprehensions for his personal safety could have

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Civic oath.

extorted, and he repaired to the national assembly, and spoke to the purport desired by the republicans. The democratic party seeing the anti-republicans overwhelmed with dismay by the acquiescence of the king, resolved to take advantage of the consternation, and issued a decree obliging every member to take a newly devised civic oath, under the penalty of exclusion from voting in the assembly. They now published a general address to the nation, stating their acts and measures for the sake of public liberty, and their farther intentions in order to complete the great work of regenerating France. Various tumults having arisen, and murders and other outrages having been committed both at Paris and Versailles, the ringleaders were seized and punished by the assembly, which with considerable vigour chastised such riots and disorders as did not promote its own purposes. Having again re-established nearly as much quietness as they wanted, and attained their object from the king, they resumed the affairs of the clergy. In February, they suppressed all monastic establishments, and for ever confiscated the lands. By another decree in April, they forfeited all the territorial possessions of the church, for the payment of the public debts, but generously allowed the plundered proprietors a small annual pittance from the booty. As the spoils were not immediately convertible into ready money, they employed them as *pledges*. They issued out a species of notes under the name of *assignats*, being assignments to the public creditor of confiscated property; and payable to bearer, that they might serve the purpose of a bank paper currency. About this time, they began to affect an imitation of the Roman republic, and adopting its phraseology with one of its customs, decreed that mural crowns should be publicly presented to the conquerors of the Bastile.

Scheme for converting the spoils of the clergy into ready money.

THE legislature were not without experiencing incon-

inconveniences from the diffusion of their own doctrines. They had found it necessary to idolize the mob; to talk of the majesty of the people; their supreme authority; their uncontroulable sway, to which all things must bend. These ideas, with the experience of their own force, operating on the ardent fancies and combustible passions of the French populace, meetings, clubs, parties, and individuals, considered themselves as collectively and separately rulers of the empire. They indeed regarded the national assembly as a necessary, legislative, and executive organ, but subject to their own general and supreme controul. As force was the great spring of government, the soldiers with reason claimed an important share in the direction of affairs; and by the laws of equality deemed themselves exempted from every degree of subordination and obedience, excepting so far as suited their wishes or convenience. Both the populace and soldiers conceived, that by their political regeneration, they were entitled without restraint to gratify every passion. The most active of the revolutionary leaders had spared no pains to banish from the people that salutary moderator of passion, the Christian religion.[1] In extent of despotic power, the French mob equalled the Turkish sultan; the army the Janissaries; and the national assembly the Divan, despotic under the despot and his soldiers, but totally dependant upon these for its own sway. But the horrible tyranny of Turkish rule was mitigated by the Alcoran, whereas the despotic licence of France was devoid of any such corrective. A great portion of the vulgar, both civil and military, were rank infidels. Thus destitute of moral restraint, all the energy of a most ingenious people,

Boundless power of the mob.

The multitude, civil and military, destitute of religion.

[1] Mirabeau laid it down as an axiom in the science of politics, that if they would have an effectual reform, they must begin by expelling Christianity from the kingdom. This maxim was loudly praised, and generally followed by the republican partizans.

all

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all the French force and versatility of intellect and temperament, were the instruments of moral depravity. A great object of the republicans in the assembly had uniformly been to identify, in the opinion of the civil and military vulgar, their interests and views with their own; and like other demagogues, while they professed to admit the rabble as their associates, really to employ them as their tools; and they in a great measure accomplished their purpose. There was, under the direction of the national assembly, an army much more numerous than ever had been commanded by the French monarchs.

MANY of the nobility, as we have seen, had been the zealous votaries of reform, while they conceived it tending to limited freedom and limited monarchy. But they had always been deficient in point of concert; by suffering separate and subordinate views to occupy their attention, they had facilitated the progress of republicanism. They had already felt the fatal effects of disunion, among the opponents of jacobinism militant, they were destined to feel them more severely from jacobinism triumphant. There was in the proceedings of the French democrats, a strange mixture of ridiculous levity with the most serious iniquity. Paris at this time overflowed with adventurers from all countries. Among these was a Prussian of the name of Clootz[m], who having left his own country for reasons recorded in the journals of the police, had resorted to Paris, and assuming the name of the ancient Scythian sage, Anacharsis, set up as a philosopher, and by his lectures instructed the Parisians. But not having hitherto attained notoriety equal to his ambition, he bethought himself of the following expedient to become conspicuous: collecting a great number of his companions and other

Mixture of ridiculous levity and serious iniquity.

[m] Ottridge's Annual Register, p. 148.

vagabonds

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vagabonds who swarmed about the streets, and hiring all the foreign and grotesque dresses from the opera and play-houses, he dedecked his retinue; and proceeding to the national assembly, he introduced his followers, as strangers arrived from all countries of the globe, being the virtual ambassadors of all those enslaved nations who wished to be free, and were therefore disposed to enter into fraternity with France, for the glorious purpose of establishing universal liberty. This deputation was most graciously received by the assembly, of which, it being evening sitting, many of the members were in a condition [n] suited to a frolic. The legislature, after some decrees and resolutions suitable to this contemptible farce, followed their deliberative levity, by a very serious act. A decree was proposed for the abolition of titles, and hereditary nobility, with all the heraldic monuments, which would recall to descendants the distinction and merits of their ancestors. In vain the nobles opposed so hasty and violent a proposition; it was immediately passed into a decree. Thus in one year, the national assembly crushed rank and distinction, confiscated property, annihilated hierarchy and aristocracy, left monarchy only an empty name, and perfected their levelling efforts; they now proposed that the 14th of July, the anniversary of the captured Bastile, and of the birth of liberty, should be solemnized by a general confederation of Frenchmen, pledging themselves to maintain the new constitution, and to bind the king, the assembly, and the people, civil and military, in one general fraternity. This spectacle was exhibited in the field of Mars, appointed to be called ever after, the field of confederation. The king, the assembly, the people, and the army,

Anacharsis Clootz, ambassador from the whole human race.

Abolition of titles and hereditary nobility.

Summary of changes within the year.

Anniversary celebration of the 14th of July in the field of Mars.

[n] Drunkenness, a vice formerly so little known in France, was since the revolution become extremely prevalent even among the lawgivers. Annual Register.

were

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were reciprocally sworn. The same oath was taken the same day through the whole kingdom.

Mr. Neckar, friendly as he had been to the popular side, disapproved very highly of the late democratical proceedings, and especially the confiscations. Being now received with great neglect and displeasure, and being apprehensive of his personal safety, he quitted the kingdom, and retired to Switzerland. In prosecuting their system of reform, the assembly thought it expedient to render the clergy still more dependant on their will. They accordingly passed a decree, imposing on clergymen a new oath, by which they were bound to submit to the constitution as decreed by the assembly, in all cases whatever. This oath was a direct breach of the oath taken at ordination; and great numbers of the clergy refused to swear contrary to their engagements and principles. All the recusants were immediately ejected from their benefices; and their livings filled by others. Thus a republican assembly endeavoured to force men's consciences to be guided by its decrees, and not satisfied with exercising tyranny over persons and property, attempted by the same despotism to enchain their minds.

Federal oath.

Violent proceedings against those who refused it.

Britain.

This year the French revolution began to be better understood in Britain, and to produce more definite and specific opinions either of approbation or censure, or of a mixture of both. Many Britons still continued upon British principles to admire the French revolution, and though they regretted the excesses which had accompanied its operations, yet expected that the violence would subside, and that a system of rational and beneficial liberty would be established. They saw that the plan of polity would considerably deviate from the British constitution. The greater number of literary men continued to favour the changes, and imputed the enormities to the vitiating system of government under

1790.

under which the French had so long lived, joined with the enthusiasm of new liberty. But the most experienced and discriminating of philosophical politicians perceived that the Gallic revolution in its nature, principles, and effects, was different from any former case, and avoided unqualified opinions concerning either its merits or probable duration. They considered it as a composition of extraordinary phenomena, not yet sufficiently investigated to become the foundation of a just theory; but they saw that the rapidity of French change far exceeded the progressive variations of circumstances, and the human character.° Writers of genius and erudition attached to certain visionary principles and doctrines, prized the French revolution more for its particular acts and innovations, than for the general assertion of liberty; and celebrated most highly those measures which overthrew hierarchy, reduced monarchy, and degraded aristocracy. Dissenters of very high literary reputation, and unimpeached private character, were so transported by their peculiar doctrines and sentiments, as to praise the lawless violence of the Parisian mob, and the abduction of the royal family in triumph, because these acts tended to overthrow the existing orders; and even recommended the example of the French to the imitation of the English. The able and eminent Dr. Price, and his many votaries in civil and religious dissent, manifested, in 1790, an unqualified admiration of the French changes, and proposed a close connection between the revolutionists of France and the people of England. Certain members of parliament, at the head of whom was Mr. Fox, continued to admire the principles of the French revolution, as tending eventually to produce a moderate and rational liberty, that would in time fit the circumstances and character of the people,

The French revolution is better understood.

Majority of literary men favour the new system, though they censure its excesses.

° See Dr. William Thomson's letter to Dr. Parr.

and

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and promote the tranquillity of Europe. The great ministerial leaders, cherishing the principles of constitutional liberty, could not reprobate in another country an attempt to procure that blessing, the enjoyment of which made this nation prosperous and happy; and when they discerned the peculiar nature and tendency of the new system, conceiving that it became statesmen less to speculate than to provide, instead of delivering judgment on the measures of the French, vigilantly watched the conduct of Britons. The sentiments of the minister and his principal supporters concerning the affairs of France, were not hitherto declared. The first open censurers of the French revolution were courtiers, who being the votaries of pageantry and shew, under a kingly government, regarded the pomp and ceremony of the palace more than the vigour and efficacy of the monarchy; who regretted Louis's loss of royal trappings and appendages, more than the seizure of his power; who considering the king's friends and attendants as no longer enjoying the balls and processions of Versailles, saw grievances, which being thoroughly conceived by their fancies, could attract their sympathetic feelings. But a ferocious confiscating democracy, overturning religion and property, did not equally affect their sensibility, because they by no means so clearly understood the nature, or comprehended the extent of the evil. One class, indeed, eminent for ability and learning, venerable for profession and aggregate character, in the early stages of the French revolution, observed its leading principles with horror, and its conduct with dread. The clergy augured ill from a system guided by professed infidels, and sympathizing with plundered brethren, beheld not without apprehension, the contagion of confiscation so very near themselves. In this country, they knew there were men as willing to plunder the church as the most rapacious revolutionists of Paris.

Mr. Pitt and his friends forbear discussion of its merits.

The clergy are alarmed by the infidelity and confiscation of the revolutionary system.

But

But though they disapproved of the French system, they did not deem it expedient to declare an alarm. Such an avowal, they thought, might imply an imputation of disloyalty, and enmity to the church, which could not be justly charged to the majority of Britons. English clergymen, therefore, did not decry the revolution, which many other literary men praised. In autumn 1790, the declared sentiments of Britons, with several modifications, were on the whole favourable to the French revolution.

Burke's work on the subject.

One man, however, was destined to effect a speedy and important change. Edmund Burke, having formed and delivered in parliament the opinions already recorded, with increasing anxiety continued to bestow the closest attention on revolutionary proceedings. He had many correspondents at Paris, of different nations, abilities, and sentiments. Through them he completed his acquaintance with the French system. While attending to its progress, and its operation within the country which it immediately affected, he carried his views to the impressions that it had made in his own country. Penetrating into the various grounds of the praise which it had procured in England, his sagacity perfectly distinguished between those who rejoiced at what they conceived the emancipation of France, and those who in the destruction of the orders, and forfeiture of property, found a model which they wished to be copied in England. In considering the admirers and supporters of the French revolution, he, from the authority of Dr. Price among his votaries, apprehended that the late promulgation of that gentleman's political opinions in a sermon might be very hurtful, unless precautions were used to expose the tendency of his doctrines. To convince mankind, especially Britons, that the French revolution did not tend to meliorate but to deprave the human character, to promote happiness, but to produce misery, to be imitated and copied,

but

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but to be reprobated and abhorred; Mr. Burke composed and published his work. To establish his position, he analyzed the intellectual principles by which the revolutionists reasoned; the religious, moral, and political principles by which the revolutionists acted; and contended that the effects which had proceeded, and were proceeding, were natural and necessary consequences of the principles and doctrines. He predicted the completion of anarchy and misery from the progressive enormity of the French system. Profound wisdom, solid and beneficial philosophy, enforced by all the powers of Mr. Burke's eloquence, produced a very great change in public opinion. From this time many men of talents, learning, and political consideration, openly declared sentiments unfavourable to the French revolution. The nobility, with few exceptions, were apprehensive of the danger which awaited their order if French principles became prevalent in great Britain. The clergy publicly testified the opinion which they before held. Ministers, cautious as they were in avowing any sentiments concerning the French revolution, did not conceal the high estimation in which they held Mr. Burke's production. The public opinion, which at first had been so extremely favourable to the French revolution, was at the end of 1790 greatly divided.

and effects.

General election.

The most important transactions belonging to the internal history of Britain in the recess of 1790, was the general election. The contests were not, however, carried on with the violence of former times. The country was in a state of progressive, and rapidly augmenting prosperity; the minister possessed the public confidence, and no great political question agitated the public mind. The election, which was most warmly disputed, did not owe the contest to the contention of parties. Of the elective bodies in Great Britain, none is of importance

tance equal to Westminster; the seat of government, the royal family, and for half the year the principal nobility and gentry: hence there had usually been a very warm competition in this city. The dispute in 1788 between Lord Hood and Lord John Townsend, had been carried on with extreme eagerness on both sides; and with an expense calculated to have exceeded even the costly election of 1784. It was tacitly understood between the two parties, that at the general election there should be no contest, but that Lord Hood and Mr. Fox should be jointly chosen. This apparent determination was represented to many electors of Westminster, as a coalition between the candidates to insure themselves the choice, and thus deceive the inhabitants. Mr. Horne Tooke, a gentleman of great and deserved literary eminence, and also of very conspicuous political conduct, which was variously interpreted, proposed himself as the representative; he disavowed all connection with any party, and assuming an independent tone, procured a respectable number of supporters; he every day exhibited from the hustings a series of acute and poignant observation; clear, direct, and vigorous reasoning, not unworthy of being opposed to the vehement and forcible oratory of his illustrious competitor; his efforts however were unsuccessful. Though there were several disputed elections, yet there was none that attracted so much attention as the poll for Westminster, in which Horne Tooke was pitched against Charles James Fox.

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CHAP. XLVI.

Meeting of the new parliament. — Convention with Spain is approved by parliament. — Expenses of the late armament. — Unclaimed dividends. — Measures of Britain for repressing the ambition of Russia — submitted to parliament — Mr. Fox opposes hostilities with Russia — argument of Mr. Pitt on the importance of Oczakow — principle of British interference in continental politics — hostilities with Russia unpopular through the nation — war with Russia avoided. — New constitution of Canada — political principles introduced into the discussion. — Mr. Fox incidentally mentions the French revolution — Mr. Burke inveighs against that event, and the new constitution — Mr. Fox explains the extent and bounds of his approbation — declares the British constitution the best for this country — quotes Mr. Burke's speeches and writings favourable to liberty — rupture between these friends, and their final separation. — Question whether impeachments by the Commons before the Lords, abate with the dissolution of parliament — precedents and arguments for and against — determination of the house that impeachments do not abate by a dissolution. — Liberty of the press — motion of Mr. Fox for ascertaining and declaring the law of libels, and bill for that purpose — arguments for and against — postponed for the present, but is afterwards passed into a law. — State and conduct of the English catholics — they renounce the most dangerous moral and political doctrines of popery — motion for their relief — modified and corrected by Dr. Horsley, it is passed into a law. — Petition of the church of Scotland respecting the test act — is rejected. — Full discussion of the slave trade — motion of Mr. Wilberforce for the abolition — arguments for and against — continuance of the trade defended on the grounds of humanity, justice, and expediency — Messrs. Pitt and Fox agree in supporting the abolition — the motion is negatived. — Settlement at Sierra Leone. — Finance. — Supplies. — Indian finance. — Trial of Hastings, evidence for

for the prosecution closed — impressive speech of the defendant. — Session rises.

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THE British parliament opened the 26th of November; and his majesty stated that the dispute between this country and Spain had been brought to an amicable termination. The first subject of Parliamentary consideration was the convention[a] with the catholic king. In a question concerning an injury, the great objects to be regarded were reparation for the past, and prevention of future aggression. In the present case, according to opposition, the restitution promised was incomplete, and the promises were not performed. Before the commencement of the dispute, we had possessed and exercised the free navigation of the Pacific Ocean, as well as the right of fishing in the South Seas, without restriction. But the admission of a part only of these rights was all that had been obtained by the convention. Formerly we had claimed the privileges of settling in any part of south or north-west America, from which we were not precluded by previous occupancy. Now, we consented to limit our right of settlement to certain places only, and even in these under various restrictions. What we had retained was vague and undefined, and consequently liable to be again disputed. We had reserved what was insignificant to ourselves, and resigned what was very beneficial to Spain. To these arguments ministers answered, if we had not acquired new rights, we had obtained new advantages. Before the convention, Spain had denied our right to the southern whale fishery, and to navigate the Pacific Ocean; but now she had ratified those claims. In the convention, the wisdom and energy of ministers had vindicated the honour of the British flag, preserved the rights of private citizens, and established the glory of the

Meeting of the new parliament.

Convention with Spain is approved by parliament.

[a] See page 122. of this volume.

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British name over all the world, without shedding a drop of blood. On these grounds the majority in both houses approved of the terms of the adjustment. The liquidation of the expenses incurred by the late armament, the minister proposed to separate from the general financial arrangements for the season; and to pay off in four years the incumbrances now incurred, by a distinct plan of finance. The first resource was the balance of the public money, which had accumulated in the hands of the bank of England from *unclaimed dividends.*[b] The bank was agent for the public; received an adequate allowance for its services, and was therefore not entitled to retain a balance greater than the probable demand. Since public creditors forbore punctually demanding their interest, not the bank, who were agents for the payment of that interest, but the nation, their employers, should profit by that forbearance. The balance had been gradually increasing from the year 1727, and now amounted to 660,000*l.* Of this sum the minister moved that 500,000*l.* should be applied to the public service, and that the creditors should have securities in the consolidated fund for payment, whenever the demand should be made. In addition to this sum, he proposed temporary duties upon sugar, British spirits, brandy, rum, malt, assessed taxes, and bills of exchange. Mr. Fox, and some other members, objected to the minister's proposition as unjust to public creditors, and also unfair to the bank. But it appearing to the majority of both houses that the creditors possessed the same security of prompt payment as before; and that no injury could accrue to an agent from his employer withholding money which was not necessary to the transactions which he was appointed to manage: notwithstanding various petitions from the bank, deprecating the application,

Expences of the late armament.

Unclaimed dividends.

[b] Many of the public creditors had omitted to demand their dividends when due; the money, therefore, issued for their payment, was used by the bank until the proprietors should demand the payment.

plication, a bill agreeable to the minister's project was passed into a law.

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Measures of Britain for repressing the ambition of Russia.

THE contest with Spain being thus concluded, another very important subject of foreign politics occupied the attention of parliament. At the congress of Reichenbach, the defensive alliance had proposed to Russia to accede to the peace which Austria was concluding, and that all conquests should be restored; but Catharine constantly replied, that she would admit of no interference between her and the Turks. Deprived, however, of the assistance of Austria, in the strength and determination of the allies she saw the impracticability of subjugating Turkey for the present, and now offered to restore all her acquisitions by the war, except the town and dependencies of Oczakow. This possession, she conceived, would on the one hand secure her dominions against the irruptions of the Tartars, and on the other command an entrance into Turkey, whenever circumstances should prove more favourable to the execution of her ambitious designs. The allied powers perfectly comprehended the objects of Catharine, and deemed them incompatible with that tranquillity which it was the purpose of the confederacy to insure. There was, besides, an unfriendly disposition long manifested by Russia towards Great Britain. During our difficulties, she had headed a confederation for the express purpose of reducing the naval power of this country. When the commercial treaty between England and Russia was expired, Catharine not only declined renewal, but obliged our merchants to pay in duties twenty-five per cent more than she exacted from other countries, though they gave half a year's credit for their exports, and were always a whole year in advance for their imports. At the same time she concluded commercial treaties with France [c] and Spain, on terms that were advan-

[c] See State Papers, and Segur's history of Frederic William.

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tageous to both these countries. Such indications of enmity to this country, joined to her ambitious projects, strongly impelled the British government to prevent the encroachments of the empress's court. Britain and her allies still adhered to their purpose, of inducing or compelling Catharine to restore the conquest. Finding pacific negociations unavailing, the defensive alliance projected more effectual interference. Having concerted forcible mediation for the security of Europe, his majesty, on the 24th of March, sent a message to both houses, stating his unsuccessful efforts for the establishment of peace, and that from the progress of the war, consequences so important might arise, as to render it necessary for this country to be prepared to meet them by an augmentation of our naval force. The message coming under consideration of Parliament, Mr. Fox opposed hostile interference on the following grounds: all wars were to Britain unwise, as well as unjust, that did not originate in self-defence. Too much latitude was given to the construction of defensive alliances, and treaties comprehended under that denomination had at present a very offensive tendency. By including in the objects of defensive resistance not only actual, and even probable, but possible injury, the professed defenders of Europe proposed to carry on war wherever they thought it expedient to any of the confederates. We had received no injury from Russia that could justify hostilities: her demands upon Turkey could not so materially affect Great Britain as to render a bloody and expensive war prudent to prevent their attainment: expediency as well as justice, forbade war with a power which neither directly attacked Britain, nor pursued any other object by which she could be endangered: the present plan of ministers tended merely to second the ambitious policy of Prussia, in whose intrigues and projects we were lately become too

submitted to parliament.

Mr. Fox opposes hostilities with Russia.

too much involved: Was the protection of a barren district in the barbarous recesses of Tartary, a reason for exposing Great Britain to the evils of war? Was our trade with Russia, which employed eight hundred and fifty ships, trained in that hardening service thousands of seamen, afforded materials for our manufactures to the amount of two millions sterling, received our manufactured goods of more than a million, and yielded two hundred thousand pounds to our revenue, to be all foregone for the sake of a Turkish fortress? Even were Russia to succeed in conquering Turkey, instead of becoming more formidable to her neighbours, she would become weaker, and spread over a more extensive surface. Could wisdom and policy justify Britain in going to war, for preserving an empire inhabited by a barbarous and savage race, habitually connected with our rival; a race that for the sake of religion, humanity, civilization, and commerce, ought to be exterminated from the continent of Europe. [d]

Arguments of Mr. Pitt on the importance of Oczakow.

MINISTERS argued that the aggrandizement of Russia, and the depression of Turkey, would injure both our commercial and political interests. While Russia was confined to the Baltic, her naval exertions would be inconsiderable; but if her fleet were suffered to range through the Mediterranean, she would become a great maritime power, and a formidable rival. The possession of Oczakow would facilitate not only the acquisition of Constantinople, but of Alexandria, and all lower Egypt. The object of Britain in opposing Russia was conformable to her general policy in continental interference. Britain had herself no ambitious end to pursue; we had nothing to gain; we wished only to remain as we were; our alliances could only have the tendency of maintaining the balance of power.

[d] See Parliamentary Reports, 1791.

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It was known to Europe, that our principles were pacific.[e] Standing on the high eminence which we occupied, we exerted our power only for the maintenance of peace. It was a glorious distinction for England, that, placed on a pinnacle of prosperity, having in her resources and power such motives to ambition, she exerted her strength not as the disturber, but the protector of her neighbours[f]: this had ever been her character and principle. In endeavouring to repress Russia, she pursued the same line of conduct which she had always chosen.

Principle of British interference in continental politics.

THE supreme director of a free country, and especially of Great Britain, is PUBLIC OPINION. The forcible eloquence of Mr. Fox, coinciding with the immediate interests of merchants and manufacturers, impressed those bodies of men very powerfully. Their sentiments were rapidly and widely diffused through the nation, and rendered the people in general inimical to a Russian war. Ministers, feeling the due and constitutional reverence for the voice of the people, sacrificed their own counsels and measures to dictates so deservedly authoritative. Although Britain was thus prevented from compelling Russia to restore the key of Turkey, yet it was the energy of the defensive alliance which induced Catharine to relinquish all the other acquisitions of the war.

Hostilities with Russia unpopular through the nation.

War with Russia avoided.

THE circumstances of one of our provinces called on parliament to frame a new constitutional code, that required discussions at all times important, but peculiarly momentous when they were combined with the questions which from the French revolution agitated the public mind. After the acquisition of Canada, a proclamation, as we have [g]seen, had been issued by his majesty, promising that measures

New constitution of Canada.

[e] See speeches of Mr. Pitt and Mr. Grenville. Parliamentary Reports.
[f] Speech of Mr. Grenville.
[g] See Vol. I.

sures should be adopted for extending to that country the benefit of the British constitution. Encouraged by this assurance, many British subjects had settled in the new province; and in consequence of the American revolution, great numbers of royalists had emigrated into a country so near to their own, and which contained inhabitants of congenial principles and sentiments; these readily coalesced with the British settlers, and joined them in frequent applications to remind government of the royal promise. The native Canadians readily admitted the excellence of the British constitution; but deprecated its unqualified extension to themselves, as tending to interfere with privileges which they had inherited from their ancestors. The Canadian noblesse, especially, enjoyed many feudal rights and immunities, which they feared the introduction of a new form of government might infringe or abolish. The minister, considering the diversity of character, sentiment, customs, and privileges, between the French Canadians on the one hand, the British and Anglo-American colonists on the other, proposed a separate legislature to each, that might be best suited to their respective interests, and social situation. With this view he purposed to divide Canada into two distinct provinces, Upper and Lower; and introduced a bill for this arrangement, and for the establishment of distinct legislatures. The division was to separate the parts which were chiefly inhabited by French Canadians, from recent settlers. For each of the provinces, a legislative council was to be hereditary, or for life, at the option of the king; and a provincial assembly was to be chosen by freeholders possessing lands worth forty shillings of yearly rent, or renters of houses paying ten pounds in six months. The provincial parliament was to be septennial, to assemble at least once in year: the governor, representing the sovereign, might refuse his sanction to

any

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any proposed law, until the final determination of Britain were known. The British government renounced the right of taxation, and though it asserted the right of regulating external commerce, yet left the imposts to the provincial legislatures. All laws and ordinances of the whole province of Canada at present in force, were to remain valid until they should be altered by the new legislature. The bill passed through both houses without any material alterations. But in the house of commons its discussion gave rise to a debate concerning the French revolution, between Messrs. Burke and Fox, who respectively delivered their principles, sentiments, and doctrines on this momentous subject, more clearly, specifically, and categorically, than in the disquisition of the former year. In considering the constitution which the legislature was preparing for Canada, Mr. Fox proposed to confer as much freedom as was possibly consistent with the ends of political establishments, instead of mere suitableness to any existing form. The scheme for the government of Canada adhered, he conceived, too closely to the British constitution, which, though the most perfectly adapted to the character, habit, and circumstances of Britons, was not the best that possibly could be framed for any case. The United States in North America would have afforded a better model, more fitted both to the character and social situation of the Canadians, than the model which had been followed. Hereditary distinctions, possessions, and powers, ought not to be abolished where they had been long established; and were interwoven with the manners and sentiments of the people, as well as the laws [b];

Political principles introduced into the discussion.

[b] These were nearly the words of Mr. Fox, at least this was certainly the substance, as appears after a careful comparison of the several reports of parliamentary debates. Yet he was misrepresented as having declared himself, without qualification, the enemy of hereditary rank and distinction. Far was he from asserting that an order of nobility was useless in any circumstances; he merely declared his opinion, that in its present state it did not suit Canada.

but

but it was unwise to create them in countries not fit for their establishment. There was not in Canada either property or respectability sufficient to support an hereditary nobility. Mr. Pitt, in defending his own plan, confined himself to its adaptation to the proposed ends, and without entering into abstract speculations upon government, contended that a polity formed for any part of the British dominions, should be as nearly as possible modelled according to the British constitution; that such being his object, he conceived it effected by the present system for the government of Canada.

Mr. Fox incidentally mentions the French revolution.

In the reciprocation of debate, Mr. Fox still reprobated the council of nobles; said he could not account for the zeal in its favour, unless by the supposition that an opportunity was eagerly embraced of reviving in Canada, formerly a French colony, those titles and honours, the extinction of which some gentlemen so much deplored, and of awakening in the West that *spirit of chivalry* which had so completely fallen into disgrace in a neighbouring country.

Mr. Burke inveighs against that event, and the new constitution.

Mr. Burke, by these expressions, conceived that his opinions, and indeed his writings on the French revolution were attacked; he also heard doctrines advanced which he deemed repugnant to the British constitution; to controvert such opinions he drew a contrast between that admirable system, and the new order of things in France. The Canada bill (he said) called forth principles analogous to those which had produced the French revolution. There was a faction in this country inimical to our constitution of church and state. It became parliament to watch the conduct of individuals or societies, which were evidently disposed to encourage innovations.

Mr. Fox explains the extent and bounds of his approbation;

Mr. Fox, conceiving that Mr. Burke intended to implicate him in the censure passed on the admirers of the French revolution, replied to his animadversions. Mr. Burke's object appeared to be (Mr. Fox said) to stigmatize

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stigmatize those who thought differently from himself on the French revolution, and who had expressed their opinions in parliament; and to represent them as the supporters of republican tenets. To vindicate himself from this charge, he distinctly and explicitly declared his own sentiments. The praise that he had bestowed, was given to the French revolution, which had abolished the old arbitrary government; and not to the system which was substituted in its stead. As a subverter of a tyranny that had enthralled twenty-five millions of people, he still would maintain that it was one of the most glorious events in the whole history of mankind. The new polity remained to be improved by experience, and accommodated to circumstances. The excellence of forms of government was relative, and depended on the situation, sentiments, and habits of the people[1]: the British constitution he thought the best and fittest for this country, and would to the utmost of his power oppose republicanism among Britons; but it was contrary to sound logic to infer, that because British liberty was most effectually secured by a government of three estates, therefore such an arrangement must be the fittest for France. He considered the late great change as the precursor of freedom and happiness to twenty-five millions, and therefore rejoiced at its success. From Mr. Burke himself he derived those principles, and imbibed those sentiments which Mr. Burke now censured: he quoted various passages from the speeches and writings of that eloquent and philosophical senator, and referred to measures which he had either proposed or promoted, and comparing them with the sentiments now or recently delivered, endeavoured to fix on him a charge of inconsistency. Mr. Burke complained of this allegation, and declared it to be unfounded:

declares the British constitution the best for this country;

quotes Mr. Burke's speeches and writings favourable to liberty.

[1] These observations are conformable to Aristotle, as the English reader will see in his Politics, translated by Dr. Gillies, book iv.

his

his opinions on government, he said, had been the same during all his political life. His conduct would evince the truth of his assertions: his friendship with Mr. Fox was now at an end; deep must be his impression of truths which caused such a sacrifice to the safety of his country; he gave up private friendship and party support, and separated from those he esteemed most highly. His country, he trusted, would measure the sincerity of his avowals, and the importance of his warnings, by the price which they had cost himself. He was far from imputing to Mr. Fox a wish for the practical adoption in this country of the revolutionary doctrines; but thinking and feeling as Mr. Fox and he now did, their intercourse must terminate. With great emotion, Mr. Fox deprecated the renunciation of Mr. Burke's friendship; and tears for several minutes interrupted his utterance. [k]. When the first ebullitions of sensibility had subsided, he expressed the highest esteem, affection, and gratitude for Mr. Burke, whom, notwithstanding his harshness, he must still continue to love. Proceeding for some time in a strain of plaintive tenderness, he gradually recovered his usual firmness, and afterwards contracted no small degree of severity, when having vindicated the resistance of France, on Whig principles, he renewed his charge of inconsistency against Mr. Burke, for deviating from those principles. This repetition of the charge of inconsistency prevented the impression which the affectionate and respectful language and behaviour, and the conciliatory apologies, might have probably made: the breach was irreparable; and from this time Mr. Fox and Mr. Burke never resumed their former friendship. In this discussion, the impartial examiner cannot find a single sentence, or even phrase, of Mr. Fox, which was not highly favourable

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Rupture between these friends, and their final separation.

[k] This account is chiefly compressed from parliamentary debates, and partly taken from a gentleman who was present.

to

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to the British constitution; so that the political difference between these illustrious men, arose entirely from their opposite apprehensions concerning the French revolution, which hitherto was to a British senator a question of speculative reasoning, and not of practical contention; but Burke had already conceived such an abhorrence of the Gallic system, that he could not bear any expression of approbation respecting a change which he deemed destructive to the best interests of society.

Question whether impeachment by the commons before the lords abate with the dissolution of parliament.

With colonial policy, parliament this year considered also important questions of domestic law. One of these arose from the trial of Mr. Hastings: it was doubted whether an impeachment brought by the commons of England abated by the dissolution of parliament. Several members of high note in the profession of the law, and among the rest Sir John Scott, the solicitor-general, were of opinion, that the renewal of the impeachment was neither justified by law, precedent, nor equity. It was a question, they said, concerning which there was no statute; we must therefore be governed by the law of parliament, that is, by the orders of the lords, and by usage. The lords in 1678, had affirmed, that dissolution did not preclude the renewal of an impeachment; but that order was not sanctioned by former practice. They had suffered the impeachment of Lords Danby and Stafford to proceed from the stage in which they had been left by the old parliament; but at that time the nation was in a ferment about the Popish plot; detested Stafford as a catholic, and execrated Danby as the supposed promoter of arbitrary power and a connection between the king and Louis XIV. Both peers and commons were seized with the same enthusiasm against popery and France, and under its influence continued the impeachment, contrary to law and usage. From these cases, therefore, which

Precedents and arguments for and against.

were

were peculiarly circumstanced, no precedent could be drawn. In 1685 Lord Danby was by the house of lords freed from the impeachment, which in fact reversed the precedent of 1678. Lords Salisbury and Peterborough being accused of high treason, pleaded a dissolution, and in 1690 were liberated. On the same grounds the Lords Somers and Halifax, Sir Adam Blair, and others, were released. To support their position, they also adduced several analogies, and concluded with arguments from equity; by continuation of an impeachment the accusers might be changed, and even not a few of the judges. If a trial is to last beyond one parliament, may it not be prolonged to an indefinite term, or even during life? a court of justice should be free from bias and prejudice; but how could this be the case with a tribunal in which there were so many new judges; and some of them even accusers from the lower house? The supporters of continued impeachment reasoned in the following manner. If the alleged precedents existed, they would be extremely prejudicial, because they would enable the sovereign to save a favourite servant, and to defeat the purposes of national justice; and it would become the legislature speedily to remedy such an evil, by a law enacted for the purpose. This remedy, however, could only be applied to future cases, without including present or past; but such a series of usages does not exist.[1] There is no evidence of parliamentary practice to justify the cessation of a trial before the truth or falsehood of the charges be ascertained. Parliamentary records demonstrate that in ancient times impeachments were continued after dissolution. But without searching into remote monuments, in the reign of Charles II, in 1673, when there

[1] See Speeches of Mr. Pitt and of Mr. Fox.

was

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was no ferment either on the one side or the other, the house of lords declared their writs of error, petitions of appeal, and other judicial proceedings, should be narrowed as to the portion of time which they were to occupy during a session, but should extend from parliament to parliament, if they were not decided. The reason of this order evidently was, that on the one hand judicial proceedings might not employ any part of the time which was required by legislative, on the other, that the objects either of civil or criminal justice might not be defeated by discontinuance of process. The precedents, it was contended, did not apply: and in the various cases alleged, the proceedings had been discontinued by a general pardon, admission to bail, or some other cause, and not from the dissolution of parliament. These positions their supporters endeavoured to evince by a consideration of the very cases that were quoted by the advocates of the opposite doctrine. They further argued, that decisions of courts of law, and the authority of judges, with few exceptions, sanctioned the same opinion; and cited cases to prove their position: the general analogy of judicial proceedings illustrated the conformity of their conception of the law of parliament with the established modes of process before subordinate tribunals: the commons are the public prosecutors, and in this respect analogous to the attorney or solicitor-general in ordinary cases of criminal prosecutions. The removal of an attorney-general does not quash an information or indictment; and the process is carried on by his successor. The public prosecutors before the house of peers, are the successive houses of commons, as before the inferior courts, they are the successive attornies general. The house of peers are the judges in causes carried on at the instance of the house of commons; the peers may

may be not all the same in successive parliaments, as the judges of the inferior courts may be changed while the trial is pending. Equity and expediency coincide with analogy; impeachments are calculated for bringing to condign punishment criminals too exalted for the inferior courts; criminals, who to secure themselves or their friends from all responsibility as ministers of the crown, might advise a dissolution, as often as it should be required for their safety. Hence parliament would be no longer able to controul either the civil or judicial administration of the kingdom. The cabinet and courts of law would remain equally without a check; it is therefore clear from the weight of precedents, the authority of the greatest luminaries of the law, the principles of the constitution, the analogy of public trials, the immutable rules of equal justice, and the dictates of expediency and common sense, that impeachments continue notwithstanding the dissolution of parliament. On these grounds a great majority in both houses voted that the impeachment of Warren Hastings was still depending.

Determination of the house, that impeachments do not abate by dissolution.

An enquiry concerning the judicial power of parliament was soon followed by a discussion of the powers of juries. One of the chief engines of that moral and political knowledge, of those sentiments and privileges of rational and beneficial liberty which prevail in Britain, is a FREE PRESS. By this vehicle a writer may communicate to the public his observations, thoughts, and feelings, and according to his talents, learning, and dispositions, may inform and instruct mankind; and thus the press bestows all the knowledge and wisdom which cannot be imparted by oral delivery. But as all persons who address the public through this vehicle are not both capable and disposed to inform and instruct society, an instrument of general good is

Liberty of the press.

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frequently productive of considerable, though partial evil. The liberty of the press has often permitted seditious, treasonable, immoral, and blasphemous libels; and generated mischiefs that were followed by very pernicious consequences. For a considerable time after the invention of printing, government possessed the means of preventing noxious publications, as the press was liable to the inspection of a licenser; but the preventive was much worse than the evil; and the subjection of writings to a previous examination, being found totally incompatible with the purposes of beneficial freedom, ceased soon after the revolution. Precluded by the law from preventing the publication of hurtful works, certain judges endeavoured to deter writers by increasing the punishment: to avoid one extreme running into its opposite, they attempted to attach criminality to productions, that before would have been reckoned innocent; and to supply the supposed deficiency of preventive justice, they tried to enlarge the precincts of penal law. They also endeavoured to change the judicial rules established by the constitution. For a series of years it had been maintained by very high legal authority, as we have already seen [m], that the truth of an allegation could not be pleaded in bar of an indictment for a libel, and also that in cases of libel juries were to investigate the fact only; to return a verdict relative to the proof of the allegations, but to leave the criminality to the judge; and though these doctrines had been questioned by very high legal authority [n], yet they were most frequently followed in recent practice. Various cases occurred in which guilt had been found on grounds, that in the popular estimation were inadequate, or punishment had far exceeded the criminality that was evinced. Mr. Fox having adopted the same sentiments respecting some late decisions,

[m] See vol. ii. chap. ix. [n] Ibid.

and

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and disapproving of the interposition, of crown lawyers, introduced a bill declaring the power of the juries to decide upon the law as well as the fact in trials of libels. Where any special matter of law is pleaded (said Mr. Fox) the judge and not the jury is to decide; but where a general issue is joined, and the law is so implicated with the fact that they cannot be separated, the jury must, as in all other criminal processes, bring in a general verdict of guilty or not guilty. The decision of this important question greatly depended on the import of the word *meaning*, used in all indictments for libels. The different senses annexed to this term Mr. Fox, explained and marked with discriminating precision. The term to *mean* might, he observed, be understood to imply a proposition according to strict *grammatical and logical construction*, or to express the MORAL INTENTION of a writer or speaker. In the former sense it had been received for many years by judges and crown lawyers; in the latter it ought to be interpreted by a candid and impartial English jury, who were to investigate the intention of the accused, as a part of the fact to be proved or disproved. It is the intention that must constitute guilt, if any guilt existed. The bill was opposed as an innovation on the laws of the kingdom, that was agitated at present by the dangerous maxims which were embroiling our neighbours. In such circumstances we ought to avoid novelties, civil and political. The present process had been the practice for a long course of years, without producing any oppression to the subject; the judges were independent of the crown, and could have no motive to unfair and partial decisions. This bill was not debated as a party question, but as a subject of existing law, justice, and constitutional right. Mr. Pitt was no less vigorous in its support than Mr. Fox, or Mr. Erskine. In the house of Lords, lord Grenville supported the motion,

Motion of Mr. Fox for ascertaining and declaring the law of libels, and bill for that purpose. Arguments for and against.

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with no less zeal than Lord Loughborough, and Lord Camden took the lead in promoting its success. After passing the commons by a great majority, it was rejected by the peers; but the following session, being again proposed, it passed into a law.

1791. Postponed for the present; is afterwards passed into a law.

MR. FOX also proposed a law for depriving the attorney general in right of the crown, and every other person in his own right, of a power to disturb the possessor of a franchise in a corporation, after having quietly exercised it for six years. The end of this proposition was, to secure the rights of election, and prevent vexatious prosecutions for political purposes: the bill was passed into a law.

State and conduct of the English catholics.

PARLIAMENT, endeavouring to remove all restrictions upon natural freedom, as far as was consistent with security, directed its attention to the Catholics. The English catholics were now totally changed, and no longer resembled the Romanists of the seventeenth century; nor even those who, at a later period, wished to exalt a popish pretender to the throne. They were now quiet and peaceable subjects, friends to the present government, and favourable to our constitution of church and state, which was so mild and tolerant to every religious sect that worshipped God according to their own conscience, without disturbing the public tranquillity. Many of the catholics, as they mingled with protestants, imbibed a great share of their mildness and moderation; and, without relinquishing the sensible rituals, prescribed observances, or the metaphysical theology of the popish church, were really protestants in their moral and political principles and conduct. A considerable body of them had recently protested in express terms against doctrines imputed for near three centuries to papists. They denied the authority of the pope in temporal concerns, his right to excommunicate princes, and to absolve their subjects from their

They renounce the most dangerous moral and political doctrines of popery.

oaths

oaths of allegiance. They disavowed the lawfulness of breaking faith with heretics; and denied that any clerical power could exempt man from moral obligations. The penal laws against catholics arising from circumstances and conduct so totally different from the present, were still extremely severe. To render the law more suitable to their present sentiments and character, Mr. Mitford proposed to repeal the statutes in question, so far as to exempt from their penal operations those who had renounced the hurtful doctrines above-mentioned, under the denomination of the PROTESTING CATHOLIC DISSENTERS, upon these catholics taking an oath conformable to the protest. The principle of the bill was generally approved; and the bench of bishops displayed the most liberal zeal in its favour, Dr. Horsley especially exerted his great abilities, not only in promoting its success, but in removing a clause which was neither agreeable to its principles nor conducive to its objects. In the proposed oath, the doctrine that princes excommunicated by the pope might be deposed and murdered by their subjects, was declared to be impious, heretical, and damnable. The catholics felt no reluctance to express their own rejection and disapprobation of such doctrine; but from scruples founded on a tender regard for the memory of their progenitors, they could not induce themselves to brand it with the terms which the oath prescribed. To remove this objection, he proposed the oath which had been adopted in 1778: this alteration was admitted, and the bill was passed into a law.

Motion for their relief:

modified and corrected by Dr. Horsley, it is passed into a law.

THE church of Scotland perceiving a disposition in parliament to grant relief to non-conformists, transmitted from the general assembly a petition praying for the repeal of the test act as far as it applied to Scotland; and on the 10th of May, Sir Gilbert Elliot made a motion conformably to the petition. The supporters of the motion endeavoured

Petition of the church of Scotland respecting the test act,

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voured to prove that the law, as it now stood, was inconsistent with the articles of the union. Scotland, by her constitution, and by treaty, had a separate church, and a separate form of religion. By the treaty of union she was to have a free communication of civil rights; but a test which, as a condition for attaining those civil rights, imposed on her a necessity of departing from her own established theology, and submitting to the system of England, either abridged her religious liberty by means of the civil attainments, or obstructed the civil attainments through the religious obligations. When the two kingdoms entered into a treaty of union, being independent nations, they meant to stipulate and contract on terms of perfect equality. Was it not an infringement of that equality, that a Scotchman entering into any British office in England should solemnly profess his attachment to the church of England, which a scrupulous man might deem a dereliction of his native church; while an Englishman appointed to an office in Scotland incurred no similar obligation. The opposers of the motion argued, that the test must have been understood as a stipulation at the time of the union, and had never been represented as an hardship till the present time. The grievance was merely imaginary; the test was not a dereliction of the church of Scotland, but a pledge of amity with the church of England. The general sentiment of members of the Scottish church was affection and respect for the sister establishment: but in Scotland there were, as in England, sectaries of various denominations, whose sentiments were less liberal. Against such sectaries it was just as well as expedient, that the test should operate; otherwise the church of England would incur a danger from them, to which from the sectaries of England she was not exposed. Since there was no test in Scotland, the proposed exemption would let in upon the church of England

land dissenters and sectaries of every denomination; and thus break down the fence which the wisdom and justice of parliament had so often and so recently confirmed. This petition, in reality, arose ultimately from the English dissenters. These had operated on the church of Scotland by representing themselves as Presbyterian brethren. Many of the Scottish clergymen, not discovering the total diversity of political sentiments that subsisted between them and many of the English dissenters, were, from supposed religious sympathy, induced to give them their support. The majority of the house being impressed by these arguments, voted against the proposition. CHAP. XLVI. 1791. Is rejected.

THE slave trade underwent this year a much more complete discussion than when it was formerly agitated. The facts on both sides had now been very thoroughly examined: there was fulness of information; so that the public and parliament had the amplest means of viewing the subject in every light. Full discussion of the slave-trade.

Mr. Wilberforce, on the 18th of April, proposed a bill for preventing the farther importation of slaves into the British colonies in the West Indies. In his prefatory speech he considered, as he had done two years before, first humanity, and secondly policy. He traced the condition of the Africans from their native country to the West India plantations; and, according to the information which he had collected, in more copious detail, with more numerous instances, repeated his former statements of the causes of slavery, the treatment of the negroes on their passage, and their sufferings under the planters. On the ground of policy he strongly argued that the abolition of the slave-trade was expedient for the West India planters and the British nation. Compelled to promote multiplication among the slaves, the planters would soon find that their present negroes, in a climate so congenial to their native Africa, would, if well treated, people Motion of Mr. Wilberforce for the abolition. Arguments for

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the plantations; and if allowed to acquire some little interest in the soil, would be stimulated to much greater exertions. The loss of seamen which Britons sustained in the negro trade was immense. From Liverpool, in one year, three hundred and fifty ships, having on board twelve thousand two hundred and fifty men, lost two thousand four hundred and fifty, being one-fifth. The commercial profits were to be totally disregarded, when acquired by such a violation of humanity, and at the expense of so many valuable lives of British sailors.

and against it.

THE continuance of this trade was defended on the grounds of justice, policy, and even humanity. Slavery had been established time immemorial in various parts of the earth, especially in Africa and the adjacent countries. So far was it from being reckoned a crime, that the Old Testament frequently mentions male and female slaves under the names of bondsmen, handmaids, and others of similar import, and never censures mancipation, but speaks of all its offices as just employments. The characters held up to imitation had slaves themselves, and endeavoured to acquire slaves to others.[o] The habits and sentiments of Africans render this condition by no means so grievous to them as it would be to people unaccustomed to the daily contemplation of slavery. The assertion of the abolitionists, that the hope of acquiring prisoners to be sold to Europeans is the chief cause of war, is far from being generally true. Wars in Africa, as well as wars in Europe, arise from pride, resentment, envy, jealousy, emulation, ambition, and other passions, besides avarice alone. As an accurate knowledge of the interior country increased, it was more clearly comprehended

[o] Joseph, a patriarch so highly favoured by God, when he became prime minister to Pharaoh, in consequence of the foresight conferred on him by the divine gift, having laid up stores of provisions against the season of scarcity, purchased with the king's corn the liberties of his subjects; and nothing in this procedure is blamed by the sacred historian. It appeared, indeed, perfectly fair and reasonable to the subjects of an African prince.

that

that captives, though a consequence of war, were far from being its most frequent objects. The purchaser of slaves taken in war preserves the lives of captives that would be otherwise butchered. Their ferocious conquerors would give way to the savage gratification of rage and cruelty, if the thirst of blood were not changed into the thirst of gain. The extreme indolence of the Africans, notwithstanding the fertility and even spontaneous productiveness of the soil, renders their supplies of the necessaries of life very scanty. Prisoners taken in war, therefore, are great burthens upon the captors; and unless there was a market for vending them, they would be immediately massacred, not merely from cruelty, but from the savage economy of those barbarians; and the European traders saved many a life. Our merchants, on the faith of parliament, had embarked property to a great amount in this trade; the total loss of which would immediately follow the abolition. The legislature had invited them to engage in the traffic, that Britain might be furnished from their plantations with those commodities which habit has now rendered universally necessary, and if not supplied by them, must be purchased from other countries. It invited them also to engage in this commerce, that the carriage of their productions might rear up a navy; yet now, when they have a capital of seventy millions embarked, when several islands lately occupied, and therefore thinly peopled, require a constant succession of fresh supplies; and when twenty millions of debt in mortgages and deeds of consignment, press heavily on the West India proprietors, the abolition is proposed in contradiction to so many acts of parliament, and without compensation of the only means by which they can be relieved from the enormous load. Is it consistent with British justice to depreciate, and even destroy, property, engaged in a commerce which the legislature pledged itself to protect, and repeatedly

Continuance of the slave-trade defended on the grounds of huma-

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nity, justice, and expediency.

edly declared its disposition to improve? But private property would not alone be affected; from this trade the revenue would suffer a very material diminuation. The evidences adduced to prove the horrid cruelties practised upon slaves were represented to be in some instances false, in many partial, in almost all exaggerated. It is the interest both of the transporting owners of slaves, and their purchasers in the West Indies, to treat them humanely, and easy to devise regulations for enforcing this treatment, and punishing the contrary. But were Britain from an impulse of benevolent enthusiasm to abolish the slave-trade, under a supposition that it subjected the Africans to the most poignant misery, would not other European nations engaged in the trade supply the vacancy left by our relinquishment of a traffic necessary for raising commodities naturalized to the European palates? Would the purchasers, the venders, or the subjects sold, be less numerous? Would fewer slaves be exported from Africa? Respecting the effects of this commerce on our navy, the friends of the abolition were totally misinformed. A naval commander of the very highest eminence, Lord Rodney, had declared that the power of obtaining from Guinea ships, so numerous a body of men inured to the climate, whenever we wished to send a fleet to the West Indies on the breaking out of a war, was, in his opinion, a consideration of great moment. His lordship's opinion was illustrated, and his authority confirmed, by concurring testimonies of other officers both of the army and navy. The abolition would be equally contrary to the commercial and political interests of the public, as to the rights and well-founded expectations of private individuals.

Messrs. Pitt and Fox agree in supporting the abolition.

On this question Messrs. Pitt and Fox took the same side, and supported the abolition with every argument that genius could invent; but their united eloquence was not effectual: on a division it was carried

carried in the negative by a majority of one hundred and sixty-three to eighty-eight. The benevolent spirit which prompted the abolition of the slave-trade, directly produced an attempt gradually to demonstrate its inefficacy and inutility. For this purpose its impugners projected to try an experiment whether Africa could not be civilized, and rendered more lucrative as a vent for manufactures, than as a nursery for slaves. Mr. Devaynes, who had long resided at Sierra Leone, on the coast of Africa, in the eighth degree of north latitude, attested that the soil is excellent, and produces cotton, coffee, and sugar, with the slightest cultivation. There a society proposed to establish a colony in hopes of effecting the desired change in the character and condition of the Africans. A bill for the establishment of such a company was introduced by Mr. Henry Thornton, and passed through both houses without opposition.

CHAP. XLVI. 1791. The motion is negatived. Settlement at Sierra Leone.

Previous to the production of his financial plan, Mr. Pitt proposed to appoint a committee to consider and report the amount of the public income and expenditure during the last five years; also, to inquire what they might respectively be in future, and what alterations had taken place in the amount of the national debt since January 5th, 1786. The report stated that the annual income, on the average of the three last years, was sixteen millions thirty thousand two hundred and eighty-six pounds; and the annual expenditure fifteen millions nine hundred and sixty-nine thousand one hundred and seventy-eight pounds, including the annual million for liquidating the national debt: the balance, therefore, in favour of the country, was sixty-one thousand one hundred and eight pounds. [p] Mr.

Finance.

[p] £ 16,030,286
15,969,178
£ 61,108

Sheridan,

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Sheridan, as usual, took the lead in combating the financial conclusions of Mr. Pitt, and moved no less than forty resolutions, which were intended to show that the past revenue had been considerably inferior to ministerial calculations; and that in calculating the future income, the minister had overlooked contingencies which recent experience demonstrated to be probable. The greater number of these propositions were negatived, and others were amended. Various resolutions were framed by ministers, confirming, in detail, the report of the new committee, and maintaining the calculations which were founded on their enquiry. The supplies were nearly the same as in the usual peace establishment, and no fresh taxes were imposed. Mr. Dundas produced his annual statement of Indian finance, which had been in a state of so progressive prosperity ever since the establishment of Mr. Pitt's plan of territorial government, and the commencement of Mr. Dundas's executive direction. It appeared from the documents which he presented, that the British revenues in the East Indies, amounting to seven millions, after defraying all the expenses of government, left a clear surplus of near a million and a half, either to be laid out in investments, or applied to contingent services. Among the pecuniary grants of this year was an annuity of twelve thousand pounds, bestowed on his majesty's third son, Prince William Henry, created about two years before Duke of Clarence.

Supplies.

Indian finance.

Trial of Hastings. The evidence for the prosecution closed.

THIS year the prosecution of Mr. Hastings closed its evidence (May 30). The managers proposed an address to the king, praying him not to prorogue the parliament until the trial was finished; but this address was negatived. Mr. Hastings, when the prosecution was closed, addressed the court in a speech of singular acuteness, force, and eloquence, exhibiting his view of the result of the prosecutor's evidence, contrasting the situation in which he found

with

with the situation in which he left British India; explicitly, but not arrogantly, detailing the counsels and conduct by which he had effected these great ends: he appealed to the commons, his accusers, in the following dignified and striking peroration. "To the commons of England, in whose name I am arraigned for desolating the provinces of their dominions in India, I dare to reply, that they are, and their representatives persist in telling them so, the most flourishing of all the states of India. It was I that made them so; the value of what others acquired I enlarged, and gave shape and consistency to the dominion which you hold there: I preserved it: I sent forth its armies with an effectual but economical hand, through unknown and hostile regions, to the support of your other possessions; to the retrieval of one from degradation and dishonour, and of another from utter loss and subjection. I maintained the wars which were of your formation, or that of others, not of mine: I won one member of the great Indian confederacy from it by an act of seasonable restitution; with another I maintained a secret intercourse, and converted him into a friend: a third I drew off by diversion and negociation, and employed him as the instrument of peace. I gave you all, and you have rewarded me with confiscation, disgrace, and a life of impeachment." Of Mr. Hastings's hearers, even those who could not admit a plea of merit as an abatement of special charges, were very forcibly impressed by this energetic representation. The defence of the accused was, by the direction of the court, postponed till the following session, and on June 10th the parliament was prorogued.

Impressive speech of the defendant.

Session rises.

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Peace between Russia and Turkey — on moderate terms. — Reasons of Catharine's apparent moderation. — Poland attempts to recover liberty and independence. — Wise, moderate, and patriotic efforts for that purpose. — New constitution, an hereditary, mixed, and limited monarchy — effected without bloodshed. — Rage of Catharine at the emancipation of Poland. — She hopes to crush the new system of Poland. — Impression made by the French revolution on other countries — on sovereigns. — Circular letter of the emperor to other princes. — Equitable and prudent principle of British policy respecting the French revolution. — Paris — ejectment and banishment of the clergy who refused the civic oath. — Progress of confiscation. — Forfeiture of the estates of emigrants. — Abolition of primogeniture. — Invasion of the rights of German princes. — The emperor remonstrates against this violation of national engagements. Proposed jaunt of the king to St. Cloud — is prevented by the populace. — Memorial of Louis delivered to foreign powers. — Flight of the king. — He is arrested at Varennes. Proceedings of the legislature during his absence. — He is brought back to Paris. — The monarchical party adopts a vigorous system, but too late. — State of parties. — The king's friends advise him to accept the constitutional code. — He accepts it in the national assembly. — Honours paid to infidel philosophers. — Want of money. — Inspection of accounts. — Dissolution of the national assembly. — Review of the principal changes effected by this body. — How it found and left France. — In all its excesses it manifested the genius and energy of the French character. — Progress of political enthusiasm. — Britain. — Certain ingenious visionaries expect a political millennium. — Thomas Paine. — Rights of man — dexterous adaptation of to the sentiments and passions of the vulgar — astonishing popularity of among the lower ranks. — Commemoration of the French revolution at Birmingham. — Riots. — Destruction of Dr Priestley's library — The Doctor's conduct. — Comparison between

between Priestley and Paine. — Rapid and extensive diffusion of democratic principles. — Wide diffusion of superficial literature — favourable to revolutionary projects. — Mary Anne Wollstonecroft. — Debating Societies. — Cheap editions of Tom Paine's works. — One able and profound work in favour of the French Revolution. — Vindiciæ Gallicæ. — Marriage of the Duke of York to the Princess of Prussia.

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CATHARINE perceived her grand object of subjugating the Ottomans, for the present, to be impracticable, and now satisfied herself with endeavouring to compel the sultan to a peace, before the interference of the confederates could prevent her from dictating the terms. With this view her armies took the field early in spring, repeatedly defeated the enemy, and compelled them to retire nearer to Constantinople; and to enhance their danger, several symptoms began to appear in Asiatic Turkey of a disposition to revolt; menaced by most imminent perils both in Asia and Europe, and apprised that the co-operation of Prussia and of Britain, was now obstructed, Selim began to listen to the proposals of the Empress; the negociation was not tedious; and a peace was concluded on the 11th of August at Galatz, by which Russia retained Oczakow, and the country between the Bog and the Dnieper, which had belonged to Turkey before the war. The latter of these rivers was to be the boundary of both powers: each to be equally entitled to the free navigation of the river; and each to erect fortifications on its respective shores. However important this acquisition might be to Russia, it was certainly much inferior to the expectations which she entertained at the commencement of the war; and during its successful progress: but other circumstances combined with the exertions of the defensive alliance to induce Catharine to content herself, for the present, with Oczakow and its dependencies. Frederic William

Peace between Russia and Turkey,

on moderate terms.

Reasons of Catharine's apparent moderation.

agreeably

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agreeably to the general objects of the confederacy, as well as his own particular interest, cultivated the friendship of Poland. Encouraged by their connection with this powerful prince, and beginning once more to conceive themselves of weight in the scale of Europe, reviving self-estimation re-kindled in the Poles that courage and patriotism, which though smothered, had not been extinguished; and thus once more they entertained hopes of freeing themselves from the thraldom in which they were held by the imperious Catharine. In 1788 and 1789, various efforts were made to establish the independent interest of Poland in the diet, and to overturn the power which Russia had assumed. A party of generous patriots stimulated their countrymen to emancipate themselves from a foreign yoke; the spirit of liberty was studiously diffused through all classes of the community; and in 1790 had risen very high. Its leading votaries saw, that the only method of securing the attachment and fidelity of the people to those who were projecting such alterations, was to accompany them with such benefits to the middling, and even to the inferior classes, as might deeply interest them in their support. But though desirous of changes, which which would terminate the oppressive power of the great, the Poles were sincerely inclined to be satisfied with a moderate degree of freedom; and at present bounded their wishes to deliverance, from the personal thraldom in which, for so many ages, they had been tyrannically held. Conformably to this disposition, the popular leaders exerted their influence, with so much wisdom and prudence among the commons, that they made no claims but those that were strictly equitable and consistent with legal subordination. On these moderate principles of freedom, the people of Poland drew up an address to the diet, amounting to a declaration of rights. This representation, instead of recurring.

Poland attempts to recover liberty and independence;

wise, moderate, and patriotic efforts for that purpose.

ring to the *natural rights of man*, antecedent to political establishment, considered *what was most expedient for the character and circumstances of the Polish people*. The constitution of Poland having been extremely defective in various constituents of liberty and security, the address in its claims, proposed such changes only as would remedy the defects, without subverting the existing orders. The nobles, clergy, and commons, should continue distinct, and the nobility retain their rank, dignity, and all the privileges which were compatible with public freedom; they should only be deprived of the power of oppression and tyranny. The commons should not only be exempted from civil thraldom, but have all the political power that was consistent with the balance of the estates. Requisitions so discriminately moderate, tending to produce the balance of the parts, as well as the welfare of the whole, were most graciously received by the Polish nobility, who shewed themselves desirous of promoting a new system, conformable to the wishes of the people. The Polish patriots were eager to complete their reform, before Russia should be in a condition to give them any effectual interruption. Reports were spread and suspicions entertained, that there was a new partition in contemplation: the only way to prevent such a calamity and disgrace, was without delay to establish a system of polity, which should produce an union of the whole strength and energy of the Polish nation, resist the interference of foreigners in its domestic affairs, and preserve its natural independence and dignity. With these views the patriots formed a system, which had for its basis, the rights claimed in the address of the people; and they presented their plan to the diet at Warsaw. The new constitution proposed two objects; the external independence, and internal liberty of the nation. The Roman catholic religion was to continue to be the

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national faith, with a toleration of every other which should peaceably submit to the established government. The clergy should retain their privileges and authority; the nobility their pre-eminence and prerogatives; the commons, including the citizens and peasants, should participate of the general liberty; and the peasants were to be exempted from the predial servitude, under which they had so long groaned. Stipulations between the landholders and the peasants should be equally binding on both parties and on their respective successors, either by inheritance or acquisition: all property of every rank, order, or individual should be sacred, even from the encroachments of the supreme national power. To encourage the population of the country, all people, either strangers who should come to settle, or natives who having emigrated should return to their country, might become citizens of Poland, on conforming to its laws. The constitution should be composed of three distinct powers, the legislative power in the states assembled; executive power in the king and council; and judicial power in the jurisdictions existing, or to be established. The crown was declared to be elective in point of families, but hereditary in the family which should be chosen. The proposed dynasty of future kings, was to begin with the elector of Saxony, and to descend to his heirs. The king at his accession must engage to support the new constitution, and was to command the army, and preside in the legislature: the legislation was to be vested in two houses, the nobility and commons, meeting by their representatives; and the judicial power was to be vested in a gradation of courts, rising to one general and national tribunal. Such are the outlines[a] of the constitution of Poland, which appeared

Now constitution, an hereditary, mixed, and limited monarchy;

[a] See Otridge's Annual Register for 1791. Appendix to Chronicle, page 88.

peared to steer a middle course between aristocratic tyranny, and democratic violence. It seemed well calculated to maintain internal liberty, encourage the industry of the great mass of the people, improve the immense advantages of their soil and situation, and invigorate their energy by the newly infused spirit of personal freedom; to confirm subordination of rank, which best guides the efforts of the people, and by diffusing harmony and force throughout the nation, to afford the disposition and means of maintaining the independence of Poland. There were members of the diet who not only opposed these proceedings, but drew up a protest against them in the form of a manifesto. Their conduct excited universal dissatisfaction, and though the moderation of the patriotic party offered no insult to their persons, yet the people could not forbear to view them with indignation. The king and the other leaders of the popular party were extremely vigilant in restraining every appearance of violence. Indeed a singular and happy circumstance of this revolution, was the peaceable manner in which it was effected: Poland attained the end which it proposed, without the loss of a single life. In framing this system, Stanislaus himself had displayed great ability: he had consulted the English and American constitutions, and with acute discrimination had selected such parts as were best adapted to the circumstances of Poland. The Polish patriots, aware of the dispositions of Catharine, and apprehending other neighbouring states to regard the project with a jealous eye, urged the speedy adoption of the new constitution; and they exerted themselves so strenuously, that on the 3d of May 1791, it was accepted by the estates, and all orders and classes of men, and ratified by suitable oaths, and inaugural solemnities.

effected without bloodshed.

THE situation of Poland, freed from the Russian yoke, and rising to independence and respectability,

Rage of Catharine at the eman-

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galled the pride, and alarmed the ambition of Catharine; she was enraged, that the Poles, over whom she for many years had imperiously domineered, now asserted a right of managing their own affairs: she saw in the power of Poland, if allowed to be confirmed, under her present constitution, a bar to the accomplishment of her vast projects: she was therefore eager to conclude the peace of Galatz, on terms less humiliating to the vanquished Ottoman, than from her successes she might have expected.

cipation of Poland;

she hopes to crush the new system of Poland.

THERE were circumstances which afforded her hopes of not only resuming her dictation in Poland, but also rendering her power over that country more arbitrary than ever.

AT the commencement of the French revolution, the other great powers of the continent were so much engaged in their own several projects, as not to bestow an adequate attention on the character and spirit of the Gallic proceedings. Spain was by far too feeble to entertain any hopes of interfering with effect in favour of fallen monarchy. The king of Sardinia afforded refuge to the exiled princes and nobility, but could supply no important aid. The refugee princes and their party, though anxiously eager to interest foreign powers in the cause of the privileged orders, yet during the year 1790 had little success; but when Leopold had restored tranquillity in the Low Countries, after having concluded peace with Turkey, and being on terms of amity with the defensive alliance, he turned his attention[b] to the situation of France. Though moved by consanguinity, he was yet more deeply impressed by kingly sympathy: he considered the present ruling party in France as inimical to all monarchy, and holding up an example which he apprehended the subjects of neighbouring sovereigns might imitate: and in these sentiments other

Impression made by the French revolution on other countries;

on sovereigns.

[b] See Annual Register, 1791, ch. iv.

princes

princes of Germany coincided. Leopold, however, was aware of the danger which would attend speedy hostilities, unless he should have more effectual auxiliaries than the petty princes of the Germanic empire. His own resources were impaired by the war from which he had so recently extricated himself. France, under her monarchical government had been always too powerful for the German empire; the present system would afford her additional energy. From these considerations so early as the spring of 1791; he endeavoured to interest other potentates in his objects; and with his own [c] hand wrote a letter to the empress of Russia, the king of England, and the king of Prussia, also to the king of Spain, the States General, the kings of Sardinia and Naples; proposing to form an union and concert of counsels and plans, for the purposes of asserting the honour and liberty of the king and royal family of France, and setting bounds to the dangerous excesses of the French revolution; to instruct their ministers at Paris to declare the concert which should be so formed; and recommend to the respective princes to support their declarations, by preparing a sufficient force. Should the French refuse to comply with the joint requisition of the crowned heads, the confederated powers would suspend all intercourse with France, collect a considerable army on the frontiers, and thereby compel the national assembly to raise and maintain a great military force at a heavy expense. The interruption of trade, and general industry, would bring the people of France to more sober thoughts; and might tend to the evaporation of their present enthusiasm. On so great an undertaking, the emperor could not venture alone; the concurrence of the other great powers, especially Prussia and Great

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Circular letter of the emperor to other princes.

[c] Annual Register as above.

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Britain, was necessary to give efficacy to the project.

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Equitable and prudent principle of British policy respecting the French revolution.

WHATEVER effect this application might have on the powers severally, to whom it was addressed, it did not succeed in producing the proposed concert. The principle of Britain manifested not only in her declarations, but uniform conduct, was that an internal change in the political system of any country did not justify the interference of neighbouring nations, unless that internal change led its votaries to aggression: that it did not belong to England to determine whether the government of France should be monarchical or republican; and that in changing her constitution, humbling her monarch, degrading her nobility, plundering her church, and even committing various acts of atrocity, in her own provinces or metropolis, she did no act which it belonged to Britain to avenge: she inflicted no injury on Britain. As impartial observers, Britons might individually censure French proceedings, as unwise, unjust, or impious; but the British nation neither possessed nor asserted a right of dictation to the French concerning the management of their own internal affairs, so long as their conduct did not produce aggression against this country.

Paris — ejectment and banishment of the clergy who refused the civic oath.

WHILE symptoms of enmity against the French revolution were manifesting themselves in some of the neighbouring countries, its votaries were proceeding in their career. With great expedition they ejected from their livings the refractory priests who would not swear contrary to their belief and conscience, and filled their places with more complaisant pastors, who were willing to submit to the powers that be; and in a few months there was a new set of spiritual teachers, most eagerly attached to the revolution to which they were indebted for their benefices. Besides this body of staunch auxiliaries, the national assembly, by robbing the

church, procured another set of very active assistants in the holders of the assignments. These were, indeed, a kind of revolutionary pawnbrokers, who advanced money on plundered effects, and depended on the stability of the new system for payment. By the spiritual influence of the new priests, and the temporal influence of the new brokers, who consisted of great monied capitalists, the people became still more attached to the revolution, and its engine the national assembly. This body of legislators, finding confiscation so productive a source of revenue, deemed it unwise to confine it to the property of the church. A new fund they provided in the estates of the refugee princes and nobility[d]; and with their usual dispatch they passed a decree sequestering the principal estates, and threatening to confiscate them all if the proprietors did not immediately return. Farther to equalize property, they passed a decree abolishing primogeniture, and ordaining that the property of parents should be equally divided among their children. But the national assembly now extended its system of confiscation to the properties of foreigners. Several German princes, secular and ecclesiastical, held great possessions in Alsace, by tenures repeatedly ratified under the most solemn treaties; and guaranteed by the great neighbouring powers. Yet these rights the national assembly overthrew by a mere act of lawless robbery.[e] This flagrant aggression on the rights of independent powers, not only excited the indignant resentment of the princes who were actually despoiled, but the displeasure and apprehensions of others. The confiscation of French property by the government was an invasion of the rights of French subjects. But the invasion of foreign property was a declaration of intended

Progress of confiscation.

Forfeiture of the estates of emigrants.

Abolition of primogeniture.

Invasion of the rights of German princes.

[d] See proceedings of the national assembly.
[e] Ibid.

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hostilities against all nations to which their plundering arms could reach. The emperor remonstrated on this violation of existing treaties, requiring compensation for the past, and security against future attacks on the rights of princes of the empire. The national assembly imputed this requisition to hostile intentions, and affirmed that there was a concert of foreign sovereigns, French princes, and aristocrats, to effect a counter-revolution: Louis, they said, had acceded to this confederation, and was preparing to escape from France.

The emperor remonstrates against this violation of national engagements.

His majesty at Easter had taken the sacrament from the hands of a refractory[f] priest, and had thereby given great offence and alarm to the Parisians. It was also remarked, that he had recently promoted officers inimical to the revolution. On the 18th of April, being Easter Monday, his majesty and family intended to repair to St. Cloud, a palace about three miles from the city, there to spend the holidays. In the morning, as the family was stepping into their coaches, an immense crowd surrounding the carriages, refused to suffer them to proceed, and insisted that they should remain at Paris. The national guards, joining the multitude, exclaimed that the king should not be suffered to depart; and the sovereign found it necessary to comply with the requisition of the populace. After several discussions, the Parisians represented their apprehension of dangers assailing them from various quarters, and especially the king's intimate counsellors. His majesty, to gratify the populace, dismissed various royalists from their places at court, and employed other means to remove the popular dissatisfaction. One step which he took for this purpose, was to send a memorial to the French ministers in foreign countries, with orders to deliver

Proposed jaunt of the king to St. Cloud, is prevented by the populace.

Memorial of Louis delivered to foreign powers.

[f] Those clergymen who would not take the prescribed oath were, by the revolutionists, styled refractory priests.

a copy

a copy at each court where they respectively resided. This document recapitulated the events which produced and followed the revolution, and described that great change as having importantly improved the condition both of the monarch and the people. It extolled the new constitution, reprobated the efforts employed to overthrow that beneficial fabric, most clearly and unequivocally expressed the royal approbation of the present system, and declared that the assertions of those Frenchmen in foreign parts, who complained that he was obliged to disguise his sentiments, were unfounded in truth. This dispatch being communicated on the 23d of April to the national assembly, was received with the loudest applause, and ordered to be posted up in the most conspicuous places of every municipality in the kingdom, to be read at the head of every regiment and company in the army, and on board of every ship in the navy. For several weeks the greatest harmony appeared to prevail between the king and the assembly. Meanwhile the royalists, without being dismayed by the power of the revolutionists, expressed their sentiments with an asperity, which increased the more that in oppression, they saw the injustice of the predominant principles, and felt the misery of their effects. Attachment however to the king's person and family deterred them from measures which they had reason to conclude, would endanger his safety; should they make any decisive movement towards a counter-revolution, they did not doubt, a massacre of the royal captives would be the sacrifice to popular fury. The deliverance of their majesties and the family from a state of real captivity, by whatever name it might be called, would enable them to begin their attempts without hazarding the royal safety. They believed that the majority of the nation secretly cherished the same sentiments with themselves, and would readily co-operate in attempting the restor-

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ation

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ation of royalty, when they saw hopes of support and success. Under this conviction, his majesty's friends employed their utmost dexterity to effect his escape from Paris. The enterprize appeared arduous, but not impracticable; his majesty was accompanied by a national guard, and also by a Swiss guard; the latter corps was warmly attached to the king and his family. The Marquis de Bouillé at different times strongly exhorted the king to fly from his oppressors, and join his friends. [g] After the obstruction of his visit to St. Cloud, he represented to him that by flight, with the countenance of foreign powers, he might be able to head all those friends of moderate liberty, and mixed monarchy, that should be inimical to democratic despotism, and to save his country from the evils by which she was now threatened. At length the marquis prevailed [h]; and it was concerted that the royal family should direct their course to Luxemburgh, the nearest part of the emperor's dominions, to which the road lay through the northern borders of Lorraine, where de Bouillé being governor of Metz, and having the command of the troops, of whom many were well affected to the king, could facilitate and protect their progress. On the 18th of June the Russian ambassador procured a passport for a Russian lady about (he said) to set out for Germany, with a specified number of attendants, and two children. On the 20th, the royal party left Paris about midnight: at St. Menehoud a postillion recognizing Louis from his picture, informed the post-master; this person, without venturing to stop the king himself, dispatched his son to Varennes, the next stage, to warn the magistrates. Apprized of his majesty's approach, the magistrates of Varennes were prepared to seize the monarch;

Flight of the king.

He is arrested at Varennes.

[g] See Bouillé's memoirs.

[h] The narrative of the king's flight is chiefly compressed from Bouillé's memoirs.

they

they accordingly took him prisoner, and sent him and his family, escorted by a strong guard, to Paris.[1] Meanwhile the king's flight being discovered about eight in the morning, filled the city with the greatest consternation. To overtake him was impracticable, as Paris was not two hundred miles from the frontiers, and he must have already effected one third of his journey. It was universally believed that hostilities had been concerted between the king and his partizans awaiting him on the frontiers of the kingdom, and that there he was to collect all the force which he could assemble, and invade France. The national assembly having met, gave orders that all people should take up arms to repel the attempts expected to be made by the king's party. Louis had left particular directions that no use should be made of the seals of office till his farther commands; but the assembly decreed that the king having absented himself, the business of the nation ought nevertheless to proceed; for which reason the seals of the state should, in virtue of their authority as representatives of the nation, be affixed as usual to their decrees, by the chief minister. The following day, news arriving of the capture of the king, turned their fears into exulting joy. On the 22d, the unfortunate prince, amidst the most insulting and triumphant acclamations, was conducted to the former place of his confinement. After investigating the conduct of various suspected persons, they at last determined to subject their sovereign himself to a judicial examination; and to manifest their sentiments respecting kings, quoted the trial of Charles I. of England. A deputation of three members was appointed to receive the king's deposition: his majesty refused to answer any interrogatories, but avowed his willingness to make known the motives

Proceedings of the legislature during his absence.

He is brought back to Paris.

[1] See the detail in Bouillé's memoirs.

for

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for his late departure. His intention (he said) was not to leave the kingdom, but to repair to Montmedi, a fortified town on the frontiers, where his personal liberty would be secure, and his public conduct under no restraint; and where he could have transacted business, together with the assembly, without the imputation of force. He did not object to the constitution, but only to the small degree of liberty allowed to himself, which so impaired the sanction of his voice, as to give it the appearance of compulsion. A memorial which he left at his departure, more fully detailed the various grounds of his dissatisfaction with the national assembly; recapitulated their various acts, and very ably exposed the despotic usurpation of the revolutionary party. The assembly answered this memorial by a manifesto which was intended to prove that their conduct had been directed by regard to the public good, that its effect was internal prosperity, and a strength that would resist every attempt at a counter-revolution. From the unsuccessful effort of the king to escape from thraldom, the republicans derived a great accession of strength. They, however, thought it prudent to assume in the assembly the appearance of moderation, while their emissaries and associates in the clubs were occupied in increasing among the people the prevailing hatred of monarchy. No faith could be reposed, they affirmed, in the king or any of his adherents, who were all ploting a counter-revolution. Under pretence of guarding against the designs of the royalists, the assembly assumed the organization of the army, and, indeed, the chief part of the executive power, which at the confederation, they and the people had sworn to leave in the hands of the king.

The monarchical party adopt a vigorous system, but too late.

The monarchical party now adopted a system of open, resolute, and vigorous opposition, which, if chosen at a less advanced stage, might have saved their country from the despotism of paramount democracy.

mocracy. They declared that they never would relinquish the defence of the monarchy: no less than two hundred and eighty joined in a bold and explicit protest against the decrees by which the assembly acted independently of the crown; but now their firm boldness was too late. The national assembly to guard against foreign invasion, gave directions for fortifying the frontiers. Meanwhile they proceeded with the constitutional code; and the king's late attempt caused the insertion of several articles which had not been before proposed. It was decreed by a great majority, that a king putting himself at the head of an armed force, hostile to the state, should be considered as having abdicated the crown. The same penalty was denounced against him were he to retract his oath of fidelity to the constitution, or incur the guilt of conspiracy against it by a criminal correspondence with the enemies of the nation. It was farther decreed, that after such abdication he should be treated as a simple citizen, and subjected, like all other individuals, to the common course of law. There was a very warm debate about the inviolability of the king's person. At this time there were four parties in the national assembly, and throughout the French empire: the royalists, whose object was the restoration of the monarchy in its former power and splendor; the moderates, who wished a mixed kingly government, consisting of different estates, uniting security and liberty with social order, and subordination: the third was the constitutionalists, the supporters of the existing polity, which, levelling all ranks and distinctions of subjects, still retained the name of king, and were by far the most numerous; fourthly, the republicans, who were gaining ground in number and strength. The royalists and moderates were eager for the inviolability of the royal person; the constitutionalists were divided; the republicans

State of parties.

were

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were strenuously inimical to the proposition: but after a long and animated contest, perceiving that by persisting in their opposition in this point they would lose the support of many constitutionalists, in order to conciliate the different parties, they proposed certain provisional modifications to accompany the inviolability of the royal person. Their opponents thought it expedient to accede to a compromise; and it was accordingly decreed, that the king's person, with certain restrictions and limitations, should be inviolable. A decree was passed, intrusting the education of the dauphin to a governor appointed by the national assembly, in order to form him to constitutional principles. The moderate party endeavoured again to introduce two separate chambers, and enlarged on the blessings of the British constitution; but their propositions were rejected. The constitutional code being finished, sixty members were appointed to present it to the king: these waited on his majesty with great solemnity, and were very graciously received. When they presented the code, he informed them, that the importance of the subject required his most attentive and serious examination; and that as soon as he had acquitted himself of this duty, he would apprize the assembly of his intentions. The violent republicans hoped that the king would refuse the constitution, and thereby justify a different system. The king and his friends were well informed of their wishes and schemes: the people in general, however, were not yet disposed to establish a commonwealth, and the greater number of them were most strenuous constitutionalists. His friends, aware of the designs of the republicans, advised the king to accept the constitutional code. Being prevailed upon, he, on the 13th of September, wrote a letter [k] announcing his accept-

Inviolability of the king's person, carried in the assembly.

The king's friends advise him to accept the constitutional code.

[k] See State Papers, September 13th, 1791.

ance,

ance, and declaring the motives of his former, recent, and present conduct. The following day, repairing to the national assembly, he verbally declared his acceptance of the constitution; and in presence of the assembly, signed his declaration. He was received with great respect, and attended by the whole assembly on his return to the Thuilleries, amidst the acclamations of all Paris. On the 28th of September the constitution was formally proclaimed at Paris. The substance of the proclamation was, that the important work of the constitution being at length perfected by the assembly, and accepted by the king, it was now entrusted to the protection of the legislature, the crown, and the law; to the affection and fidelity of fathers of families, wives, and mothers: to the zeal and attachment of the young citizens, and to the spirit of the French nation.[1] While the assembly had been thus engaged in completing the new constitutional code, it bestowed the highest honours on the memory of those revolutionizing philosophers who had contributed so powerfully to the change. As Voltaire had been so efficacious an enemy to Christianity and the church, the assembly conferred signal honours on his remains, which they ordered to be transported from his burial-place, and deposited in the church of St. Genevive, the place appointed for receiving the ashes, and perpetuating the memory, of those who had deserved well of the French nation. Equal honours were decreed to Rousseau: he had been the object of almost constant persecution by priests and their votaries. France, that had now dispelled the clouds of superstition, and broken the fetters of tyranny, after having profited so much by his labours, ought to pay that veneration to his memory when dead, which ignorance and superstition had denied to

1791. He accepts it in the national assembly.

Honours paid to infidel philosophers.

[1] See State Papers, September 28th, 1791.

him

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him while he was alive. The public joined with the assembly in doing homage to the characters of these writers, and also to Helvetius and others, who had distinguished themselves by their exertions against Christianity. To gratify the prevailing sentiment, the theatres were, as usual, accommodated: plays were represented in which infidel writers and doctrines were held up to admiration: religion, and the various establishments and orders by which it had been maintained, were exposed to ridicule and contempt. That they might contribute as much as possible to the perpetuation of their system, the revolutionists endeavoured to instil such sentiments concerning the relations of domestic and private life, as would best correspond with their political establishments.[m]

Want of money.

AMIDST the many plans for regenerating France, there was one evil which ingenuity could not remedy; this was the scarcity of money. Notwithstanding the immense forfeitures, there was still a great deficiency of income compared with expenditure. The army required to support the new liberty was more numerous, and much more expensive, than the armies of the old monarchy had been at the most extravagant periods. The populace considered exemption from taxes as one of the sacred rights which they ought to enjoy, and therefore paid very sparingly and reluctantly. The boldest and most ardent champions of religious, moral, civil, and political regeneration, neglected no opportunity *of committing theft.* The assembly had declared that all property belonged to the state: from this comprehensive theorem they deduced a corollary[n], that whatever was thus acquired by the state belonged to any lawgiver or statesman that could get it into his possession. Though these peculators publicly celebrated the

[m] See Burke's Letter to a Member of the National Assembly.
[n] See Playfair's History of Jacobinism.

credit

credit of the national paper, in their own accumulations they gave the preference to gold and silver. Many other monied men who had amassed their riches by fair means, being doubtful concerning the stability of the new government, hoarded the greater part of their cash. All who were disaffected to the revolutionary system, to discourage assignats as well as to secure their own property, concealed as much as possible their gold and silver. A great part of the hidden treasures was lodged in foreign countries, especially the British funds, which even the French patriots practically acknowledged to afford the best security for property.[o] As silver and gold disappeared, the paper money was proportionably depreciated; and great pecuniary distress prevailed. The indigent now became a more numerous body than ever, and made desperate through want, broke into every recess where they thought money was hoarded, and exercised their depredations with such dexterity, that numbers of individuals lost immense sums, notwithstanding the carefulness and extraordinary precautions with which they had been [p] concealed. As a considerable part of pecuniary distress was imputed to the administrators of the revenue, who were the most zealous members of the popular party, the aristocrats very minutely investigated and severely scrutinized their conduct; and when the accounts were presented for inspection, declared openly, that they conceived them false, and the documents and vouchers by which they were supported fabricated for the purpose of covering fraud and depredation. The arguments and statements were very strong and clear, but the assembly overthrew arithmetical results by a majority of votes; and *so far*

Inspection of accounts.

[o] So great was the influx of French money into England during the year 1791, that whereas seventy-five had been the average price of the consolidated annuities of three *per cent.* during the five preceding years of peace and prosperity, from Midsummer 1791 the average price was about eighty-eight.

[p] See Playfair on Jacobinism.

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the patriots were cleared from the charges. The purgation of these patriotic financiers was the last important act of the national assembly: on the 30th of September 1791, this body was dissolved by a speech from the king, in which he solemnly repeated his promises to maintain the constitution.

1791. Dissolution of the national assembly.

Revision of the principal changes effected by this body.

THUS terminated the first national assembly of France, which in little more than two years had effected a more complete change in the government, ranks, orders, laws, religion, doctrines, opinions, sentiments, and manners of the people, than any legislative body ever before effected in a series of ages. It found an absolute monarchy; left an uncontrouled popular legislature, with a king nominally limited, actually subdued. It found the laws, which, emanating from the Roman code, and intermingled with the feudal institutions, had spread over the greater part of Europe, and subsisted in France for twelve centuries; it left a new code, which originated in a metaphysical fiction of universal equality; vindicated to man, when member of a community, all the rights which might belong to him in a state of separation from his fellow-men, and applied to a constituted society principles that presuppose no society to exist. It found disparity of rank, a political result from inequality of ability and character, extending itself to descendants: it left all rank and eminence levelled with meanness and obscurity; seeing that in the progress of hereditary transmission there might be degeneracy, instead of correcting the abuse, it abolished the establishment. It took away one of the strongest incentives to splendid and beneficial actions, in the desire of a parent to acquire, maintain, or extend, honour or dignity, which he may not only enjoy himself, but transmit to his children. It found the people, though turbulent, and reluctantly submitting to arbitrary power, well inclined to a free system,

How it found and left France.

which

which should include order and subordination. Expelling monarchical despotism, instead of stopping at the middle stage, which wisdom dictated, it carried the people to the opposite extreme of democratic anarchy. Impressing the multitude with an opinion that the general will was the sole rule of government, it induced them to suppose that their wills jointly and individually were to be exempt from restraint; and that the subjection of passion to the controul of reason and virtue, was an infringement of liberty. It found property secure, and left arbitrary confiscation predominant. It found the people Christians; left them infidels. But whatever opinion impartial posterity may entertain of this legislative body, either in the revolution which they effected, or the new system which they established, it must be admitted that uncommon ingenuity, skill, vigour, and perseverance, were displayed in the means adopted to give to the projected changes the desired effect. Their great and fundamental principle was, to revolutionize the minds of their countrymen, as the only sure means of civil and political revolution. In the clubs, the populace, and the army, modelled by their pleasure, they formed most effectual instruments for carrying their schemes into execution, and rendering their will the paramount law. The first national assembly manifested ability and genius, which, unfortunately for their country, were neither guided by wisdom nor prompted by virtue.

In all its excesses it manifested the genius and energy of the French character.

THE revolutionary leaders did not confine their efforts to their own country. They employed emissaries in other nations to disseminate their principles and co-operate with champions in the same cause. A spirit of political enthusiasm had, indeed, been spread through a great part of Europe. In Germany, and particularly in the Prussian dominions, a set arose, though under different denominations, who, ascribing the greater

Progress of political enthusiasm.

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part of human calamities to bigotry, superstition, arbitrary power, and error, endeavoured to awaken their cotemporaries to the most animated hopes, of the advantages that were to flow from political improvement, philosophical education, and, in all things, a vigorous exercise of reason. They professed, at the same time, the warmest sentiments of humanity, and a spirit of universal philanthropy.

Britain.

In Britain, as we have seen, the leading doctrines of the French revolution were maintained from various causes, and to different extents, by numbers of writers, more especially by those of the unitarian dissenters. In the beginning of this year Dr. Priestly employed his rapid and indefatigable pen in answering Mr. Burke. After repeating his usual arguments against the existing establishments, the doctor confined himself to a prophetic vision of the manifold blessings which *were to flow* through the world from the glorious French revolution. This event was to diffuse liberty, to ameliorate society, and to increase *virtue and happiness*.

Certain ingenious visionaries expect a political millennium.

A political millennium was about to be established, when men should be governed by the purity of their own minds, and the moderation of their own desires, without external coercion, when no authority should exist but that of reason, and no legislators but philosophers, and disseminators of truth. But a work soon after made its appearance, which, however little entitled to historical record for its own intrinsic merits, is well worthy of mention, as the cause of very important and alarming effects; this was a treatise entitled, *The Rights of Man*, by Thomas Paine; already mentioned as the author of a violent pamphlet written to prevent reunion between Britain and her colonies. Paine having gone to Paris soon after the commencement of the revolution, and thoroughly imbibed its doctrines and sentiments, undertook to induce the English to copy so glorious a model. Perhaps, indeed,

Thomas Paine.

indeed, there never was a writer who more completely attained the art of imposing and impressing nonsense on ignorant and undistinguishing minds, as sense and sound reasoning; more fitted for playing on the passions of the vulgar; for gaining their affections by gratifying their prejudices, and through those affections procuring their assent to any assertions which he chose to advance. His manner was peculiarly calculated to impress and effect such objects. The coarse familiarity of his language was in unison with vulgar taste; the directness of his efforts and boldness of his assertions passed with ignorance for the confidence of undoubted truth. It was not only the manner of his communication, but the substance of his doctrine, that was peculiarly pleasing to the lower ranks. Vanity, pride, and ambition, are passions which exist with as much force in the tap-room of an alehouse as in a senate. When peasants, labourers, and journeymen mechanics, were told that they were as fit for governing the country as any man in parliament, it was a very pleasing idea; it gave an agreeable swell to their self-importance: when farther informed, that they were not only qualified for such high appointments, but also, if they exerted themselves, that they were within the reach, they were still more delighted. Through a book so popular, very great additions were made to the English admirers of the French revolution. Societies and clubs, in imitation of the French Jacobins, fast increasing in number and divisions, testified the highest approbation of Paine's *Rights of Man*; and very industriously, through their affiliations, spread cheap editions of it among the common people, in all parts of the kingdom.

Rights of Man—dexterous adaptation of to the sentiments and passions of the vulgar.

Astonishing popularity of among the lower ranks.

On the 14th of July, a party of the admirers of the French revolution met at Birmingham to commemorate its commencement, under the auspices of its great champion Dr. Priestly. Previous to

Commemoration of the French revolution at Birmingham.

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the meeting, a hand-bill [q] was circulated, outrageously seditious, stigmatizing all the established orders, and urging insurrection against church and state. As the majority of the inhabitants were warmly attached to the constitution, this mischievous production excited very great alarm and rage. The celebrators having assembled, the populace surrounded the tavern where they were met; and as Dr. Priestly had so often and openly avowed his enmity to the church, they very unfortunately supposed that the present paper, dooming our establishment to destruction, was composed and dispersed by him and his votaries. Under this apprehension they became extremely riotous, burnt one of the conventicles, destroyed several private houses, and among the rest, the library of Dr. Priestley, containing a most valuable apparatus for philosophical experiments, and also many manuscripts. The tumults raged for two days so violently that the civil magistrates were inadequate to their suppression. A military force arriving the third day, dispersed the mob; and the magistrates thus assisted, re-established tranquillity. All friends to our king and constitution sincerely regretted these lawless proceedings, though evidently originating in a zealous attachment to our establishment. Men of science lamented the destruction of Dr. Priestley's library, of his collection, machinery, and compositions on physical subjects, *in which department* the exertions of his talents and learning were supremely valuable.

Riots.

Destruction of Dr. Priestly's library.

The doctor's conduct.

THE conduct of Dr. Priestley himself upon this occasion, though it could not diminish the public abhorrence of such outrageous violence, by no means increased sympathy in the sufferings of its principal object. Hastening to London, he wrote an address to the inhabitants of Birmingham, in

[q] See Gentleman's Magazine for July 1791, and Chronicle of Annual Register for the same month.

which,

which, though he justly exposed the lawless disorder of the insurgents, and naturally complained of the mischiefs that they had perpetrated, yet the main scope of his letter was to attack the church, and impute the riots to its principal supporters in the vicinity. The tumultuous excesses he illogically and falsely ascribed to the badness of the cause; as if the intrinsic merits of any system could be lessened by the madness or folly of its defenders. Various addresses of condolence sent to Dr. Priestley by societies of dissenters, and other clubs, very clearly demonstrated the sanguine hopes of the writers, that the downfal of our establishments was approaching. Mr. Benjamin Cooper, secretary of the revolution society, hoped that the church which he (Mr. Benjamin Cooper) pronounced *an ignorant and interested intolerance*, was near its end. Dr. Priestley's reply chimed with this Mr. Benjamin Cooper's tune. The young students at Hackney college expressed their conviction of the folly of existing establishments. Priestley's answer[r] to their letter may be considered as a *recitation of his political creed.* The hierarchy (he said), equally the bane of Christianity and of rational liberty, was about to fall: he exhorted these young men strenuously to use their efforts in so glorious a cause, and to show by the *ardor* and *force* of their exertions against the constituted authorities, how much more *enlightened* understandings, and liberal sentiments were formed by the plan and instructions of their academy, than those that were imbibed in national institutions, fettering and depressing the mind. The doctrines so earnestly inculcated by Priestley and his class of enemies to our establishments, tended to promote the success of Paine's political lessons.

[r] See Gentleman's Magazine, for November 1791, p. 1024, and Annual Register, 1791. Appendix to Chronicle, p. 86.

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Priestley was more fitted for forming visionary and sophistical speculatists among men of superficial literature, whereas Paine was best qualified for effecting a change on the vulgar and ignorant. Priestley dealt chiefly in prescription; his nostrum to be applied to every case was *alterative*: Paine was operatical and proposed *immediate incision*. From Priestley proceeded such philosophers as Godwin and Holcroft; from Paine such practical reformers as Watt and Thelwall. Priestley, to use his own words, had laid the train, Paine's desire was to light the match. Republican, and even democratic principles, continued to make a rapid progress during the remainder of the year. It would be extremely unjust and illiberal to impute to Unitarian dissenters indiscriminately, the principles and intentions so obvious in the heresiarch. It is however well known, that if not all, very many of that class of dissenters, were at this time inimical to the British constitution of church and state. Besides the dissenters, there were other sets of men who regarded the French revolution as a model for imitation. From causes purely political, without any mixture of theology, some of the votaries of a change in parliament, and other departments of the state, conceived the diffusion of French principles highly favourable to their plans of reform. In the metropolis, besides men of genius and learning, well affected to the French revolution, there was another set of adventurers in literature and politics, very eager in maintaining and spreading its doctrines. If learning be not more profound in the present than in former ages, it is certainly spread over a much wider surface. The commercial opulence of the country encourages the manufacture and sale of literary commodities of every value and denomination. The demand extending to a vast variety of productions, which require neither deep learning nor vigorous genius,

Comparison between Priestley and Paine.

Rapid and extensive diffusion of democratic principles.

Wide diffusion of superficial literature,

favourable to revolutionary notions.

the

the number of authors multiplies in proportion to the moderate qualifications that are necessary. All these, down to translators of German novels, and collectors of paragraphs for the daily papers, deem themselves *persons of genius and erudition, and members of the republic of letters.* In France, literary men possessed great direction; many of this class in England conceived, that if the same system were established here, they might rise to be directors in the new order of things. There were in the literary class, as in other bodies, persons who, from a benevolent enthusiasm, hoped that the French constitution would extirpate vice and misery, and diffuse over the world philanthropy and happiness. Among the literary producers, there was one set who thought the highest perfection of the human character was sensibility; and that the restraints of religious and moral precepts, as well as of political establishments, were harsh and tyrannical, because they so often contradicted the impulse of sentimental feeling; these praised the French revolution in the belief that it was inimical to austere restrictions. Under this class were to be ranked various female votaries of literature, and at their head Mary Ann Wollstonecraft, who produced, as a counterpart to the Rights of Man, a performance entitled the Rights of Woman; vindicating to the sex an exemption from various restrictions to which women had been hitherto subjected from the tyranny and aristocracy of men; but first and principally from the restraint of chastity; and claiming the free and full indulgence of every gratification which fancy could suggest, or passion stimulate. Besides these classes, there was a great and multiplying variety of clubs for political discussion and debate. To these resorted many mechanics, tradesmen, and others, from a desire extremely prevalent among the lower English, of distinguishing themselves as *spokesmen.* By degrees,

Mary Ann Wollstonecraft.

Debating societies.

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grees, from hearing speeches and reading pamphlets, they supposed themselves politicians and philosophers, and thought it incumbent on so enlightened men, to drop the prejudices of education; and sacrificed religion, patriotism, and loyalty, at the shrine of vanity. From so many causes, and through so many agents, the revolutionary doctrines were disseminated very widely. To facilitate circulation, opulent votaries published cheap editions of the most inflammatory works, especially Paine's *Rights of Man*, which contained the essence of all the rest.

Cheap editions of Tom Paine's works.

But men of high rank, and of the highest ability and character, still admired the French revolution as likely to produce, when corrected by time and experience, the extension of moderate and rational liberty; and, besides Dr. Priestley, a few others of eminent genius celebrated the French changes, in literary works. Of these, by far the most distinguished production that appeared in England in vindication of the French revolution, was Mr. Mackintosh's answer to Mr. Burke The obvious purpose of this learned and philosophical writer is the melioration of the condition of man; convinced that men habitually guided by reason, and determined by virtue, would be happier under small than considerable restraints, he proposed a controul too feeble for the actual state of men now existing; much more of a people whose national character, from the old despotism, and other causes, required a greater degree of controul than some of their neighbours. The erroneous conclusions of this forcible and profound writer appear to have arisen from two sources; first, he argued from a supposition of an attainable perfection in the human character, instead of an accurate estimate of the degree of perfection which it had actually attained. Secondly, he appears to have been misinformed concerning

One able and profound work in favour of the French revolution.

Vindiciæ Gallicæ.

cerning the principles, spirit, and character of the French revolutionists.

1791.

Marriage of the Duke of York to the Princess of Prussia.

GREAT and important as the progressions of public opinions were in 1791, to arrest the attention of the philosophical observer, the actual events in England to employ the pen of the annalist, were not numerous. His highness the Duke of York, in the close of the year 1791, married the eldest Princess of Prussia, between whom and the English prince a mutual affection had subsisted ever since the royal youth's residence at the court of Berlin. The arrival of the fair stranger, the many festivities that ensued on so auspicious an occasion, and the appearance of the new married couple in public, agreeably relieved the political discussions which had long absorbed the attention of the public.

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Meeting of Parliament.— Opposition censure the conduct of ministry respecting Russia. — Incidental but interesting debates about the French revolution. — Real difference between Messrs. Burke and Fox. — Motion of Mr. Whitbread respecting the riots at Birmingham. — Petition of the Unitarian dissenters — rejected. — Multiplication of political clubs. — Society of the friends of the people — rank, character, and property of the members. — Mr. Grey. — The Earl of Lauderdale. — Address of the society to the people of Great Britain. — Intention good, but tendency dangerous. — Mr. Pitt opposes this engine of change. — Rise and progress of corresponding societies. — Second part of Thomas Paine's Rights of Man. — Ferment among the populace. — The lower classes become politicians and statesmen. — Proclamation against seditious writings — discussed in parliament. — Schism among the members of opposition. — The heir apparent testifies his zeal for supporting the British constitution. — General satisfaction from the manifestation of the prince's sentiments. — Bill for the amendment of the London police. — Humane and discriminate propositions of Lord Rawdon for the relief of debtors and benefit of creditors. — Abolition of the slave trade is carried in the house of Commons. — Subject discussed in the house of Lords. — Duke of Clarence opposes the abolition. — His highness exhibits a masterly view of the various arguments. — The question postponed. — State of the crown lands — especially forests. — Mr. Pitt's bill for enclosing parts of the New Forest — disapproved — rejected by the peers. — Mr. Dundas's bill for facilitating the payment of wages and prize money to sailors — passed. — Finances. — Prosperous state of commerce and revenue. — Prospect of farther reducing the debt, and diminishing the taxes. — Flourishing state of India finances. — Political state and transactions in India. — Beneficial effects of Mr. Pitt's legislative measures, and Mr. Dundas's executive management. — Sir John Macpherson, governor general. — Able and

and successful administration — succeeded by Lord Cornwallis. — Wise plans of comprehensive improvement. — Tippoo Saib recruits his strength. — His ambitious projects revive — attacks our ally the Rajah of Travancore. — The British council remonstrates to no purpose. — The English armies invade Mysore from the East and West coasts. — Campaign of 1790 — indecisive. — 1791. Lord Cornwallis himself takes the field — reduces the greater part of Mysore — comes within sight of Seringapatam — prevented by the overflow of the Cavery from investing the metropolis of Mysore. — In 1792 besieges Seringapatam. — Tippoo Saib sues for peace, and obtains it at the dictation of Lord Cornwallis. — Generous conduct of his Lordship respecting the prize money. — Measures for the improvement of British India.

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PARLIAMENT met January 31st, 1792. His Majesty's speech mentioned the marriage of his son, and the peace concluded between Russia and Turkey; but dwelt chiefly on the rapidly increasing prosperity of the British nation, which must confirm steady and zealous attachment to a constitution that we have found, from long experience, to unite the inestimable blessings of liberty and order; and to which, under the favour of Providence, all our advantages are principally to be ascribed. Members of opposition arraigned the conduct of ministers concerning Russia. Both the accusation and defence necessarily repeated former arguments. The British government thought interference necessary for the balance of power; and though they had sacrificed their own counsels to the voice of the public, the armament prepared upon that occassion had not been useless, as it had prevented the Turks from being obliged to make such concessions as would have been otherwise extorted.[a]. Mr. Fox, conceiving himself, and those who coincided in his sentiments respecting the French revolution, indirectly censured

Incidental but interesting debates about the

[a] See Parliamentary Debates, January 31st, 1792.

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1792. French revolution.

sured by the praises of the British polity, clearly and forcibly demonstrated the compatibility of satisfaction at the downfal of French despotism, so inimical to human rights, and destructive to human happiness, with the highest veneration and warmest attachment to the British constitution, the preserver of rights, and promoters of happiness. He rejoiced at the overthrow of the French despotism because it was bad, but would use every effort to support the British constitution, because it was good. In subsequent discussions, Mr. Fox more explicitly than ever exhibited to the house his sentiments and views on this momentous subject. The French, with characters formed by the old despotism, now emancipated from slavery, are actuated by a most impetuous enthusiasm, which drives them, as it has driven every other votary, to violent excesses. But enthusiasm, like every ardent passion, must, as knowledge of human nature and history inform us, ere long subside. It is illogical to impute to the principles of the French revolution the excesses which really arise from a sublimated state of passion that cannot last. Enthusiasm accompanied the reformation; enthusiasm marked the efforts of the puritans, which vindicated British liberty from kingly and priestly tyranny. But the free principles and beneficial establishments subsist many ages after the passion subsided. Do not therefore proscribe the French revolution because a fury that must be temporary has inspired many of its votaries. Let the noxious fumes evaporate, you will retain the genuine spirit of liberty salutary to mankind. Such was the opinion of one personage, not less profound as a political philosopher than forcible as an orator, decisive and energetic as a statesman. Many and various in detail as were the subjects of difference between him and Mr. Burke upon French affairs, the principle was simple. Fox esteemed the outrages incidental effects of an enthu-

Real difference between Messrs. Burke and Fox.

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siasm which must be temporary, and which formed no part of the essential character of the revolution: Burke reckoned the excesses necessary and essential parts of the revolution, which legitimately descended from its nature and principles, and increased as they advanced; and which could never cease to operate until the revolutionary system ceased to exist. Fox thought the French to be men in the ardent pursuit of what was good, and transported by passion beyond the bounds of moderation and wisdom; as men pursuing what was really good have often been transported: Burke considered the whole nation as actuated by a spirit of diabolism, eagerly bent on perpetrating all possible mischief; a phenomenon never before known in the history of mankind; and therefore, if true in that particular case, requiring, from its contravention to probability, the stronger evidence. From the opposite theories which they formed as political philosophers, these illustrious men deduced very opposite practical systems, which they recommended as statesmen. Burke very early [b] recommended and inculcated a confederacy, which, upon his hypothesis, was not only wise, but absolutely necessary. If the French were devils incarnate, to prevent the diabolical spirit from operation, neighbouring nations must overwhelm the power of beings so possessed, or perish themselves from the frenzy. Fox, not regarding them as a multitude of dæmons, but as the votaries of enthusiasm, recommended to encourage their spirit of liberty, and suffer their passions to subside through time, the surest corrector. Hostile interference in their internal concerns would support instead of extinguishing their enthusiasm, turn its efforts to external defence, and give them an energy that would prove fatal to

[b] See his Hints for a memorial to be delivered to the French Ambassador; and Thoughts on French affairs, both written in 1791.

those

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those who had roused it into action. These were the leading diversities in the theoretical and practical systems of Messrs. Fox and Burke, which account for the whole series of their respective counsels and conduct concerning France. Ministers still avoided the delivery of opinions on events and systems which had not interfered with the interest of Great Britain. Though the French revolution was never directly before the house, yet many of its proceedings arose from questions of liberty and reform, which that great event was instrumental in suggesting.

Motion of Mr. Whitbread respecting the riots at Birmingham.

Mr. Whitbread, a new member, of good talents, respectable character, and immense fortune, who had joined the party of Mr. Fox, reviewing the riots at Birmingham, imputed these outrages to the encouragement given by government to persecutors of the dissenters, because they were inimical to civil and ecclesiastical tyranny. The magistrates were not sufficiently active; the government had been dilatory in sending troops; and several rioters had been acquitted: some, after being condemned, were pardoned. Mr. Dundas, now secretary of state, said, that on enquiry by the attorney-general, there appeared no grounds for censuring the magistrates. From a detail of dates, and military stations, he proved that no time had been lost in dispatching troops to Birmingham. The rioters pardoned, had experienced the royal mercy on the recommendation of the judges.

The Scotch episcopalians perceiving a disposition in parliament to extend toleration as far as political security would admit, petitioned for a more ample and unrestrained indulgence, than that which they had hitherto enjoyed. The former motives for laying them under legal discouragements subsisted no longer: the house of Stuart, to which their attachment was known, was extinct; and their fidelity to the actual government was not liable, on that account, to be suspected. A petition for exemption from

from restraints, the reasons of which no longer existed, was favourably received by a legislature at once indulgent and discriminating. A bill was accordingly introduced into the house of lords, and passed both houses. The Unitarians alleging this law as a precedent, applied for a repeal of the penal statutes; and in addition to the usual reasons for refusing their application, their recent practices were stated as inimical to church and state, especially their active dissemination of Paine's works, and other democratical performances, and their formation of political clubs and societies.

Petition of the Unitarian dissenters, rejected.

While various subjects of alleged defect, or projected amendment, either in measures of government, or the existing laws were agitated, a project was formed by a society of gentlemen, for making an important change in the composition of the legislature; this association, consisting of men eminent for talents, for character, for political, literary, and professional ability; for landed and mercantile property, for rank and importance in the community, took to themselves the name of the *Friends of the people*. The following were the general objects which they professed to seek:—To restore the freedom of election, and to secure to the people a more frequent exercise of their right of electing their representatives. For the purpose of these reforms in parliament and the country, they instituted their society, but though determined to promote them, resolved to confine their pursuit rigorously to such means as should be consistent with the existing constitution. A short declaration of these objects and means, was framed by a committee, and signed by the society, with an address to the people of England tending to prove; first, that reform was wanted; secondly, that the present, a season of peace and prosperity, was the best fitted for commencing and establishing that reform; and that if there existed some degree of discontent, the proposed reform was well fitted

Multiplication of political clubs.

Society of the friends of the people.

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for its removal: that the projected means were calculated to promote the good without incurring any danger; thirdly, the objection arising from recent events in France, could not apply to a case so very different, as the British constitution, with some abuses, was from the old despotism of France. The object of the society was to recover and preserve the true balance of the constitution, They announced the determination of the society, to move a reform in parliament early the ensuing session. On these avowed principles of their union, they looked with confidence for the co-operation of the British nation: these are the outlines of an address which may be considered as the manifesto of the *only* respectable body, which, since the commencement of the French revolution, undertook the cause of parliamentary reform. The society included the greater number of eminent oppositionists in the house of commons with one member of the house of lords: This was James, earl of Lauderdale, a nobleman of very considerable abilities, and deeply conversant in moral and political philosophy and history, who had distinguished himself, first as lord Maitland in the house of commons, and afterwards made a no less conspicuous figure in the house of peers. Mr. Grey was appointed to take the leading part for the society in the house of commons. Mr. Grey had been educated an English whig, and considered the opposition party as the supporters of whig principles; and in his present measure conceived himself paving the way for a truly whig parliament. The rank and fortune of this peer and commoner, independent of their respective characters, and also the talents, character, and situation of other members, afford very satisfactory grounds for believing them actuated by constitutional motives. It is indeed not impossible to suppose, that subordinate to patriotism mere anti-ministerial considerations might have some weight,

rank, character, and property of the members.

The Earl of Lauderdale.

Mr. Grey.

and

and that, as Mr. Pitt had once been the advocate of reform, and was not likely to be so in the present circumstances, they might hope to reduce him to some embarrassment, and expose him to the charge of inconsistency. But though such intentions perhaps operated in some degree with some of the members, there is much reason to be convinced that the friends of the people, as a society, desired only what they conceived to be moderate reform, without having the least design to invade the fundamental parts of the constitution. Their association however was liable to weighty objections: these were not incidental, but resulted from the nature, constitution, and proceedings of the society, combined with the circumstances of the country; their two declared objects, extension of suffrage, and abridgment of the duration of parliament, were both expressed in vague terms; so that they might be, and in fact actually were, construed differently by the different votaries of reform: By very many they were interpreted with so great latitude, as to comprehend universal suffrage and annual parliaments. An address to the people of Great Britain, severally or aggregately, respectable as they were, desiring them to co-operate in producing an undefined change in the legislature, was a measure, however pure in its motives, very doubtful in its tendency. Presuming the existence of great and radical abuses, it either supposed the incompetency of parliament to remedy evils, and consequently its insufficiency for its constitutional purposes; or was futile in desiring from the people a co-operation which was not wanted. It afterwards appeared that this society proposed to the people, to form themselves into associations to petition parliament for reform. They thereby afforded a colourable pretext for framing associations composed of very different members, and entertaining very different sentiments: the friends of the people eventually produced

Address of the society to the people of Great Britain.

Intention good, but tendency dangerous.

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duced the affiliated political clubs, which are since so well known under the name of the Corresponding Society, and proved so dangerous in their operations.

To sound the disposition of parliament, Mr. Grey intimated his intention of urging parliamentary reform early in the next session. Mr. Pitt totally regardless of the imputations which might be made against himself personally, most unequivocally, reprobated the design of the society; he was friendly to reform peaceably obtained and by general concurrence, but deemed the present season altogether improper; and was therefore inimical to the attempt. The object of the society was to effect a change by the impulse of the people; he would strenuously oppose the movement of so formidable an engine; the operations and consequences of which was so much calculated to out-go the intentions of the mover. Mr. Fox did not join a society whose objects and proposed means were so extremely indefinite; and the notice was received with very strong and general disapprobation. The affiliated clubs now, imitating the French jacobins, rapidly multiplied; the principal assemblage of this sort, was the *London Corresponding Society;* the secretary of these politicians was one Thomas Hardy, a shoemaker: their ostensible plan was under the auspices of this shoemaker, and others of equal political ability, and importance in the community, to effect a change in parliament. The great preceptor of these disciples was Thomas Paine, whose second part was now published, and strenuously exhorted the practical application of the doctrines which he had promulgated in his first; it directed his votaries to pull down every establishment, and level all distinctions, in order to enjoy the Rights of Man; by far the greater number of the lower ranks and a considerable portion of the middling classes were infected with the revolutionary fever,

Mr. Pitt opposes this engine of change.

Rise and progress of corresponding societies.

Second part of Thomas Paine's Rights of Man.

Ferment among the populace.

fever, which operated in the wildest and most extravagant ravings. Thomas Paine was represented as the minister of God, dispensing light to a darkened world[c]: the most industrious and useful classes of the state were seized with a furious desire of abandoning their own course of beneficial and productive labour, and taking the management of public affairs into their own hands. All the levelling notions of John Ball, John Cade, and the fifth-monarchy men appeared to revive with an immense addition of new extravagance. Government had considered the theories of Thomas Paine's first part as such deviations from common sense, that they expected their intrinsic absurdity would prevent them from doing any actual mischief, and had therefore forborne a judicial animadversion which might have given them adventitious importance. But when they found, that attempts were made to reduce the theories into practice, and that a second part of the speculative jargon, added direct exhortations to subvert the constitution; that they were very generally read by the vulgar and ignorant classes, and producing other works of a similar tendency, they adopted means both for a penal retrospect and for future prevention. A prosecution was commenced against Paine; and a proclamation issued May 21st, warning the people against such writings and also such correspondencies with foreign parts, as might produce the same or similar effects; and enjoining all magistrates to exert their utmost efforts to discover the authors, printers, and publishers of such pernicious works. A copy of the proclamation being laid before the houses of parliament was taken into consideration on the 25th of May: and the discussion which it underwent shewed that a very considerable schism had taken place

The lower classes become Politicians and statesmen.

Proclamation against seditious writings.

Discussions in parliament.

[c] See a seditious morning paper of those days, called the Argus; also democratical pamphlets, and the Analytical Review for 1791 and 1792, passim.

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among members of opposition. Mr. Grey and the friends of the people took the most active share in censuring the proclamation as neither necessary nor useful for its ostensible purpose. Their arguments were that the seditious writings which it professed an intention to restrain had prevailed for more than a year, and if they were so noxious, ought to have been prosecuted at common law; and on their own hypothesis that the works in question were dangerous, ministers deserved severe censure for not having before employed proper means to remove this danger. But the prevention of seditious writings, was not the real object of the proclamation: its purpose was to disparage the friends of the people, to prevent parliamentary reform, and to disunite the whigs; and it was farther intended to increase the influence of government by subjecting to spies and informers all who should differ from administration. These sentiments were by no means general, even among the usual adversaries of Mr. Pitt: in both houses, many members accustomed to vote with opposition joined the minister upon this occasion.[d] Considering precaution against the present rage of innovation as necessary to preserve the constitution, and their respective rank, property and distinctions, they joined in supporting a measure calculated, they conceived, to repress so alarming a spirit. The overthrow of the aristocracy, abasement of rank, and confiscation of property under the new French system, impressed on their minds by the glowing eloquence of Mr. Burke, had alarmed many of the chief nobility, and great landed proprietors for their own privileges and possessions. These with their friends and adherents, and others who entertained or pretended to entertain similar sentiments, without forming a junction with the ministers, voted on the same side, on subjects that

Schism among members of opposition.

[d] See Parliamentary Debates of May 25th, 1792.

respected

respected the French revolution or any of its doctrines. In the house of peers, the earl of Lauderdale and the marquis of Lansdown only spoke against the proclamation: from this time ceased the great whig confederacy, which during the principal part of the two former reigns had been predominant; and during the present was so powerful as to have repeatedly ejected the ministers agreeable to the crown.

The heir apparent testifies his zeal for supporting the British constitution.

On this occasion the heir apparent for the first time delivered his sentiments in parliament. His highness considering the critical state of affairs, as requiring from every friend to his country, a manifestation of the principles which he was resolved to support, and the more strongly in proportion to his rank and consequence in the country, spoke to the following effect:—"When a subject of such magnitude is before the house, I should be deficient in my duty as a member of parliament, unmindful of that respect which I owe to the constitution, and inattentive to the welfare, the peace, and the happiness of the people if I did not state to the world my opinion on the present subject of deliberation. I was educated in the principles of the British constitution, and shall ever preserve its maxims: I shall ever cherish a reverence for the constitutional liberties of the people; as on those consitutional principles, carried uniformly into practice, the happiness of these realms depends, I am determined, as far as my interest can have any force, to give them my firm and constant support. The question at issue is in fact, whether the constitution is or is not to be maintained; whether the wild ideas of untried theory are to conquer the wholesome maxims of established practice; whether those laws under which we have flourished for such a series of years, are to be subverted by a reform unsanctioned by the people. As a person nearly and dearly interested in the welfare, and I shall emphatically

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add, the happiness of the people, it would be treason to the principles of my own mind, if I did not come forward and declare my disapprobation of the seditious writings, which have occasioned the motion before your lordships. My interest is connected with the interest of the people; they are so inseparable, that unless both parties concurred, the happiness of neither could exist. On this great and this solid basis, I ground my vote for joining in the address which approves of the proclamation. I exist by the love, the friendship, and the benevolence of the people, and their cause I will never forsake so long as I live." The patriotic sentiments, so forcibly and impressively declared in the manly and dignified eloquence of the royal speaker, conveyed very great and general satisfaction to all his hearers, who loved their country, to whatever party they might adhere.

General satisfaction from the manifestation of the prince's sentiments.

AMONG the applicants for reform this year were the royal boroughs of Scotland, from which certain petitioners stated flagrant abuses in the administration of the revenues, and also other grievances that, if proved, would have demanded redress; but the allegations not having been supported by proof, the motions arising from the petitions were negatived by a great majority.

GREAT complaints very generally and justly prevailed at this time of the police of London. The British capital surpasses in populousness all European cities; in opulence any city throughout the known world. With wealth comes luxury, which frequently extends beyond the possessors of riches, pervades many of the poorer classes, and produces habitual wants, that cannot be supplied but by criminal means. In a city abounding with every pleasure that can captivate the human heart, excess and debauchery naturally exist. The freedom of the country does not permit the same means of prevention as under absolute governments; hence

State of the police in the metropolis.

dissipation

dissipation ripens into profligacy, profligacy rises into criminal enormity. In London the temptations are powerful and seductive to those indulgences which corrupt principle, vitiate character, and waste property. Thence arises the desire of seizing by fraud, theft, or force, the substance of others as the means of vice. The practicability of plunder is much greater, and the materials of depredation much more numerous, valuable, and accessible[e], than in any other city known in the history of mankind. Besides the profligate of our own country, London, like ancient Rome[f] is the receptacle of exotic wickedness. Every adventurer who, from the poverty of his own country, personal incapacity, idleness, or dissipation, cannot earn a competent subsistence at home, flocks into England, and preys upon the metropolis. Hence arises a very great increase of vice and depredation, in their various departments, but, above all, in that parent of crime, gaming. This destructive propensity within thirty years far surpassed the most extravagant excesses of former times: descending from the great, it pervaded the middle and lower conditions of life, and generated many enormities. Akin to this propensity, and originating in the same desire of acquisition without industry, is the spirit of chimerical adventure in lotteries, funds, and other subjects of hazardous project. Though this spirit enriched several votaries, it impoverished many more; and sent them, with the habits of indulgence which had been cherished during the season of temporary success and aerial hopes, to increase the number of those who find in fraud and rapine the means of luxurious enjoyments. From these and many collateral causes, sprang a vast and increasing variety of crimes against the police of the country; against the persons, habitations, and property of the inhabitants.

[e] See Mr. Colquhoun's Treatise on the Police, passim.

[f] See Juvenal, satire iii.

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A multiplicity of rules and ordinances had been enacted at divers periods and different occasions, but had experimentally proved unequal to the ends proposed, for want of sufficient powers being lodged in the magistracy and its agents, to discover and suppress, in a summary and expeditious manner, whatever had a visible tendency to disturb the public tranquillity. The justices of the peace were formerly men of rank, property, character, and consideration in the country where they were commissioned to act: such gentlemen gratuitously administered justice. The simplicity of life and manners prevalent among our ancestors did not afford that complication of misbehaviour and of transgressions for which such a multiplicity of laws in modern times, have been provided. But with the modes of artificial life, and the improvements of civilized society, the modes of crime also multiplied; and the once venerable office of justice of the peace became at last too fatiguing and burdensome for people of opulence and distinction. Their unwillingness to accept of so heavy a charge obliged the ruling powers to apply to individuals of inferior character, who, in accepting of it, had an eye to the profits and emoluments arising from the exercise of their judicial powers. From the period when that honourable and weighty office was thus degraded, it lost, by degrees, the reverence in which it had been held. Venal and mercenary persons were appointed, whose base practices became so notorious, that they drew general odium and contempt both upon themselves and their functions. Hence the vilifying appellation of *a trading justice* was at last applied, with too much reason, to many of those who exercised that office. To rectify the abuses imputed to these, and to place the office itself on a footing of respectability proportionate to its importance, in the beginning of March a bill was introduced, with the countenance and approbation of government,

Justices of the peace.

Bill for the amendment of the London police.

into

into the lower house. Different offices were to be established in the metropolis, at a convenient distance from each other, for the prompt administration of those parts of justice which are within the cognizance of justices of the peace. Three justices were to sit in each of these offices, with a salary of 300*l.* a year to each: they were to be prohibited from taking fees individually; and the money from the fees, paid into all the offices, was to be collected and applied to the payment of their salaries and official expenses. That the law might have a preventive operation as well as a penal, a clause was inserted, vesting in constables a power to apprehend people who did not give a satisfactory account of themselves, and empowering the justices to commit them as vagabonds. There were, it appeared from evidence, large gangs of the most desperate villains, who were notorious thieves, lived by no other means than plunder, infested every street of the metropolis, and put the person and property of every individual passenger in danger every hour of the day and night. Various objections were made to the bill as an entrenchment on the liberty of the subject, and an increase of the power of the crown; but on investigation and enquiry, the necessity of it was found so strong as to over-rule the arguments of its opponents, and it was passed by a considerable majority.

Humane and discriminate propositions of lord Rawdon for the relief of debtors and benefit of creditors.

While these measures were adopted to secure the innocent and industrious against the profligate and atrocious, the wisely generous Rawdon resumed his efforts for affording relief to the unfortunate, by a revision of the laws relating to debtors and creditors. His lordship's general object was, on one hand to compel the debtor to give up all that he possessed, on the other to prevent the creditor, after such a cession of effects, from confining the debtor in jail for life. His lordship, with discriminating justice equal to the benevolence

of

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of his spirit, sought the reciprocal benefit of both debtor and creditor. He proposed that no man, to gratify a malignant disposition, should have it in his power to keep his fellow-creature in perpetual imprisonment, merely on choosing to pay him fourpence a day; and that no man should continue in prison to the injury of his creditor, to revel in luxury on property which might pay his debts. As the subject was of very great importance, and required a full and minute discussion of principles, and a very nice discrimination of circumstances and cases, it was recommended to his lordship to postpone its introduction till the following session, by which time it might be maturely weighed; his lordship consenting, for the present withdrew the bill.

is postponed.

Abolition of the slave-trade is carried in the commons;

THE slave trade this session again occupied the commons, and was also considered by the lords. In the lower house, the abolitionists having succeeded in the main question, were divided as to the time when the suppression should take place. At last, at the instance of Messrs. Dundas and Addington, it was agreed that the trade should cease from the 1st of January 1796. In the house of lords, the same arguments were used that had been employed on both sides by the commons. The duke of Clarence, who now, for the first time, spoke in the house of peers, made a very able, comprehensive, and impressive speech, against the abolition of the slave-trade. This royal senator rejected all fanciful theories, argued from plain and stubborn facts, and took for his guide experience, the only unerring director of the statesman and lawgiver. Indeed his repeated orations on this subject exhibited and enforced every argument, from either humanity, justice, political and commerical expediency, that could be adduced; and his clear and manly reasonings constitute the most satisfactory and complete treatise

is opposed in the lords.

The duke of Clarence exhibits a masterly view of the various arguments, and opposes the abolition.

treatise which has hitherto appeared on that side of the question. The majority of the peers concurred with his highness in opposing the abolition, but the final determination of the question was postponed to the succeeding year.

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State of the crown lands, especially forests.

Among the national objects which engrossed this session of parliament, was the state of our forests. Commissioners appointed to inspect the crown lands reported that the principal reservoir of materials for our navy, the New Forest in Hampshire, was in such a condition, that unless proper attention were bestowed immediately, there would be no timber fit for public service for many years; but that if adequate care were employed, in a short time it might yield a considerable quantity. Impressed by their representations, Mr. Pitt proposed a bill to enclose certain parts of the New Forest, for promoting the growth of timber. Very strong objections were made to this proposition in the house of commons, of which many of the members professed to think it a job for the private emolument of Mr. Rose secretary to the treasury, instead of a national object. In the house of peers it was strongly reprobated, particularly by the lord chancellor, and was finally relinquished.

Mr. Pitt's bill for inclosing the New Forest, is rejected by the peers.

Bill of Mr. Dundas for facilitating the payment of wages and prize-money to sailors.

Mr. Dundas having in his official capacity, as treasurer of the navy, learned the many difficulties which, through their thoughtlessness and ignorance of business, our gallant supporters often experience in the recovery of their wages and prize-money, introduced a bill to remove the obstacles, and prevent the frauds. When the bill was passed, Mr. Dundas sent a printed account of the spirit, tendency, and provisions of this new act, to all the parochial clergy in Britain, to be read from the pulpits, and explained to sailors and their connections. Since that time the impostures which before were so frequently practised by personating individuals, forging

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forging wills, and other criminal artifices, are very rarely attempted.

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Finance.

In bringing forward his plan[s] of finance, Mr. Pitt shewed the national revenue to be in such a favourable state, that a diminution of the public burdens might be reasonably expected. The taxes for the year 1791 had produced 16,730,000*l.* exceeding the average of the last four years 500,000*l.*; after subtracting from which the sum total of the expenditures, which amounted, by the reductions proposed, to 15,811,000*l.* the permanent income would exceed the permanent expense, including the million annually appropriated to the extinction of the national debt, by no less than 400,000*l.* The supplies wanted for the present year would amount to 5,654,000*l.* for which the means provided constituted a sum that exceeded the former by 37,000*l.* From the foregoing statement, Mr. Pitt was of opinion, that the surplus would enable government to take off such taxes as bore chiefly on the poorer classes, to the amount of one half of that sum; and to appropriate the other half to the diminution of the public debts. By the methods projected for the redemption of this debt, 25,000,000*l.* would be paid off in the space of fifteen years; towards which the interest of the sums annually redeemed would be carried to the sinking fund, till the annual sum to be applied to the redemption of that debt amounted to 4,000,000*l.* This favourable state of the finances arose from the actual prosperity of the nation, which though arrived at an eminent degree, had not yet attained that summit of grandeur and felicity that lay within the reach of its industry and manifold abilities. During the discussion on the ways and means, several severe strictures were made on the mischiefs of lotteries, in wasting the property and corrupting

Prosperous state of commerce and revenue.

Prospect of farther reducing the debt and taxes.

[s] February 17th.

the

the morals of the lower classes. Ministers replied, that the lottery was a tax upon adventure, which would exist though it were not taxed; it was no reason to forbear a productive source of revenue, that its subject might be abused. Near the close of the session Mr. Dundas laid before the house his annual statement of the income and expenditure of British India. In the preceding session the surplus, after deducting all charges, was 1,409,000*l.*, applicable to the reduction of the company's debt, and to purchase an investment. The actual revenues of Bengal, Madras, and Bombay, he stated at 7,350,000*l.*; the sum remaining, together with that which arose from the sale of imported goods, amounted to 591,000*l.* from which deducting the interest paid at Bengal, Madras, and Bombay, the surplus of the whole was between 300,000*l.* and 400,000*l.* From a general review it appeared, that war with Tippoo Saib, and the interest of the debt, had nearly exhausted the whole revenue of India, and the profits of the sales; and that a debt had been contracted of 1,782,328*l.*, arising from the purchase of investments. Notwithstanding the increase of the India debt, Mr. Dundas stated the affairs of the company to be on no worse a footing at the commencement of 1792, than at the commencement of 1791; and they had been improved at home by the payment of debts to the amount of 694,000*l.*, and by an increase of money in their treasury, amounting to 541,400*l.* Thus after a war of eight months, the company's finances were only the worse by 276,000*l.* On the 15th of June, the session terminated with a speech from the throne, in which his majesty, mentioning the state of affairs in Europe, declared his own intention to observe a strict neutrality.

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Flourishing state of India finances.

While so many important concerns both internal and continental interested the British nation, a war breaking out in India, engaged a considerable share of

Political transactions in India.

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of the public attention. The peace of Mangalore, caused by the reduction of Tippoo Saib's strength, endured no longer than his deficiencies lasted. Inheriting the views and passions of his father, he sought the empire of India, and as a step to its attainment, the expulsion of the English, his most powerful rivals. For several years he had been collecting and disciplining large armies; and though hopeless of assistance, either from France or the native powers, was not afraid singly to provoke England to war. The English government in India, well informed of his designs, was sufficiently prepared for counteraction. Mr. Pitt's plan for the administration of the Indian territories, executed under the direction of Mr. Dundas, had corrected abuses, restored prosperity, and extended revenue through British India. Sir John Macpherson succeeded Mr. Hastings as governor general, and imitated in peace the plans of economy which his predecessor had concerted and executed, as firmly and constantly as was possibly consistent with the necessary expenditure of multiplied wars: he thereby surmounted the pecuniary difficulties in which the executive government was unavoidably involved. He liquidated the civil and military debts which had been incurred, and established such a system for reducing expenditure and improving income, as greatly facilitated the beneficial administration of the board of controul. Lord Cornwallis being sent out to India, in spring 1786, and with the double appointment of governor-general and commander-in-chief, arrived at Calcutta in September, and found the different presidencies in rising prosperity. He availed himself with moderation, firmness, and temper, of the best arrangements of his predecessors, and introduced several new regulations that contributed farther to the public welfare, including the security and happiness of the natives. In Madras and Bombay, affairs

Beneficial effects of Mr. Pitt's legislative measures, and Mr. Dundas's executive management.

Sir John Macpherson Governor General,

able and successful administration of.

He is succeeded by Lord Cornwallis, who proceeds in plans of comprehensive improvement.

were proportionably flourishing; the British presidencies were also secured by a very powerful military force. The Nizam and the Mahrattas, as well as less considerable powers in the southern parts of the peninsula, were in alliance with the English. Such was the state of India when Tippoo Saib commenced hostilities by attacking our ally the Rajah of Travancore, whose dominions the English had guaranteed with Tippoo's consent, at the late peace. The council of Madras remonstrated, and attempted amicable mediation, but to no purpose. Bound in honour and justice to protect our ally, the supreme government of Bengal declared war against the sultan of Mysore. In June 1790, general Meadows from the Carnatic, invaded Tippoo's dominions, while general Abercrombie from the west, having conquered Cannamore, advanced towards Seringapatam. Tippoo, with masterly skill, eluded all Meadows' ablest efforts to bring him to battle, and after a long and tiresome succession of marches and countermarches, with several skirmishes, the English general was obliged by the rainy season to return to Madras. Nor were Abercrombie's exertions after the reduction of Cannamore during the first campaign, attended with any decisive efforts. Though the campaign in all its operations, very honourably displayed British valour and conduct, yet it did not answer expectations, and Lord Cornwallis himself judged it expedient to take the field the following year. In March 1791, he proceeded to Mysore by the Eastern Ghauts; and having surmounted the passes, he attacked Bangalore, the second city of the Mysorean empire. Tippoo marched to its relief: for so important an object ventured a pitched battle, was defeated, and the town was taken by storm. Lord Cornwallis now proceeded towards the capital of Mysore, whither Abercrombie was also advancing with the western army. In the month of May he

Tippoo Saib recruits his strength. He attacks the Rajah of Travancore.

War, and invasion of Mysore.

Campaign of 1790, indecisive.

1791, Lord Cornwallis invades Mysore, and comes within sight of Seringapatam;

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arrived in the neighbourhood of Seringapatam, where he found Tippoo very strongly posted, and protected in front and flank by swamps and mountains: not deterred by these difficulties, the British general attacked the enemy, and though the Mysoreans made a very gallant resistance, entirely defeated them, and compelled them to seek shelter under the guns of the capital. The sun was about to set when the victorious English, pursuing the enemy, first beheld Seringapatam rising upon an island, in all the splendour of Asiatic magnificence, decorated with sumptuous buildings, encircled by most beautiful gardens, and defended by strong and extensive fortifications. The grand object of their pursuit now appeared to the English within their immediate grasp; but disasters which no foresight could have anticipated, and no wisdom could have prevented, now obstructed its attainment. A covering army was necessary while they were carrying on the seige, both for supporting their operations, and for commanding the country, to secure the conveyance of provisions. When Lord Cornwallis set out on this expedition, he had trusted to the co-operation of the Mahrattas, but was disappointed. Still expecting general Abercrombie, he marched up the Cavery, to secure and facilitate the advance of the western army; but the river suddenly swelling, rendered the junction of the two armies impracticable. The troops from Bombay reluctantly yielding to necessity, departed for the western coast, exposed to all the fury of the monsoon which was then raging on the Malabar side of the mountains. Cornwallis having halted some days to cover the retreat of the other army, deemed it expedient to defer the siege of Seringapatam till the following campaign, and spent the remainder of the season in reducing the interjacent country and forts, securing communication with the allies, preparing plentiful supplies of provision, and making

is prevented by the floods of the Cavery from investing the metropolis of Mysore.

making other dispositions for commencing the investment as soon as the monsoon should be over. The most difficult and most important acquisitions during the remainder of this campaign, were Nundydroog, the capital of a rich district, and Savendroog, or the Rock of Death, a fortress which commanded a great part of the country between Bangalore and Seringapatam. Early in 1792, the Nizam and the Mahrattas joined the British army, now on its march; and on the 5th of February, the British host once more appeared before Tippoo's capital. On the 7th, soon after midnight, they attacked the sultan's lines, forced his camp, gained a complete victory, and compelled him to confine himself within the city. The Bombay army now arriving, a junction was effected between Abercrombie and the commander-in-chief, and the city was invested on every side. Seringapatam has the form of a triangle almost isoskeles: two sides are washed by the river, while the third is joined to the country. On this, the western side, as naturally the most accessible, the fortifications are the strongest: aware of this circumstance, the British general, instead of directing his main attack from the island, resolved to make his assault across the river. The trenches were open, the siege was advancing with great rapidity, and dispositions were made for commencing an immediate assault. The sultan seeing himself hemmed in on every side, importuned by the people to terminate the war, and fearing sedition if he refused, at last sued for peace, which was granted him on the following conditions: first that he should cede one half of his dominions to the allied powers; secondly, that he should pay three crores, and thirty lacks of rupees[h]; thirdly, that he should unequivocally restore all the prisoners which had been taken by

In 1792, he besieges Seringapatam.

Tippoo sues for peace, and obtains it at the dictation of Lord Cornwallis.

[h] About 4,125,000*l.*

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the Mysoreans from the time of Hyder Ally; and fourthly, that two of his three eldest sons should be delivered up as hostages for the due performance of the treaty. Agreeably to these terms, the treasure began to be carried to the British camp, and on the 26th, the young princes were conducted to lord Cornwallis. This ceremony was performed with great pomp: meanwhile Tippoo made some attempts to retard the execution of the treaty, but lord Cornwallis issuing orders for recommencing the siege, he submitted to all the British demands; and the peace was finally concluded on the 19th of March. Thus ended a war which delivered the company from the dangers to which it was exposed, by the inveterate hostility of the most powerful of its neighbours; constantly inclined from interest and connection, to unite with France. The territories of which Tippoo was divested, were divided between the three allied powers, in three equal portions. This act of good faith to our allies, and the separate arrangements made by lord Cornwallis with the nabobs of Oude and the Carnatic, as well as the principal native rajahs, left a very honourable and advantageous impression of British justice on the memory of the natives. Lord Cornwallis and general Meadows, with great generosity, resigned their share of the plunder to the rest of the army. His lordship having reduced this potent enemy, turned his attention to the improvement of the territory which had been ceded by the sultan of Mysore. Several British gentlemen had applied themselves to the study of the oriental languages, and by this means had become acquainted with the history and customs of the natives. Among other valuable information, they had learned the ancient mode of collecting the revenues throughout India. By conversancy in the Persian and Indostan tongues, both civil and military officers discovered that the system of collection in Mysore was extremely productive,

Generous conduct of his lordship respecting prize-money.

Measures of for the improvement of India.

ductive, without oppressing the inhabitants; and that its chief advantage arose from the imposts being fixed, so that accounts were simplified, and the oppressions of intermediate agents were not suffered to exist. His lordship, from the knowledge which he had acquired concerning Indian systems of finance, extended his improvements to Bengal, and other settlements in India.[1]

[1] See Annual Register, 1792.

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The French revolution chiefly engages the attention of the continent and of Britain. — The British government still resolved not to interfere in the internal affairs of France. — Catharine's views respecting Poland — she desires to embroil her powerful neighbours in war with France. — Cautious prudence of Leopold. — Convention at Pilnitz between the chief powers of Germany. — The parties disavow hostile intentions against France. — The French king notifies to foreign princes his acceptance of the new constitution — answers of the different powers. — Circular note of the Emperor. — Sweden and Russia urge the German powers to active hostilities, but without effect. — Proceedings in France. — Meeting of the second National Assembly — they conceive internal revolution a reason for changing the law of nations — Seizure of Avignon — Operations of the French exiles at Coblentz. — The king urges them to return — rapid diminution of the king's power. — General character of the French nation. — Violent passions, ardour of pursuit, and energy of action — the same character appears in their religious, loyal, and democratical enthusiasm — progress of republicanism. — Intrigues between the royalists and republican leaders — from the emptiness of the royal coffers are unavailing. — The king refuses to attempt his escape. — Different views of the emigrant princes and of the nobles — of foreign potentates. — Disputes between the French government and the elector of Treves. — The princes of the empire headed by the Emperor and supported by Prussia form a confederacy for defending their rights. — Sudden death of the Emperor. — Preparations of the king of Sweden. — Assassination of that heroic prince. — The French government demands of Austria and Prussia the disavowal of a concert hostile to France. — Basis of tranquillity proposed by Francis and Frederic William. — French declare war against Austria and Prussia. — Counter declarations. — The Duke of Brunswick is appointed general of the

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ings of the Duke of Brunswick. — He enters France and advances towards Champaign. — Dumourier, the French general, occupies a strong position. — The Duke of Brunswick retreats. — Elation of the French. — Dumourier enters the Netherlands, defeats his enemy at Jemappe, and reduces the country. — The French propose to conquer and revolutionize all neighbouring states. — Noted decree of November 19th, encouraging foreign nations to revolution. — The French open the Scheldt, contrary to treaties with Britain. — Effects in Britain from French doctrines and proceedings. — Anti-constitutional ferment during the recess of 1792. — English republicans confidently hope for a change. — Alarm of many friends of the constitution. — Mr. Reeves's association against republicans and levellers — is very generally joined — and gives an important turn to public opinion. — The king embodies the militia — and at such a crisis summons parliament before the appointed time.

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WHILE lord Cornwallis thus effected so great a change in Indostan, the eyes of all Europe were fixed on the revolutions of Poland and France. From the admiration of virtue, or from the enmity of ambition, princes and subjects were warmly interested in the concerns of the gallant, moderate, and discriminating votaries of rational liberty in Poland, but they were still more universally and vigilantly attentive to the furious proceedings of democratical and anarchical licence in France. Every friend of human rights regarded the Polish establishment of diffused freedom with complacency and satisfaction; but he rejoiced at it on account of the Poles themselves, without considering his own security or interest as likely to be affected by the acts of men who confined their views to their own country. In contemplating France, whether with a friendly, hostile, or impartial regard, every neighbouring beholder saw that the conduct of the Gallic revolutionists would and must influence other nations. The principles and proceedings,

proceedings, whether deserving praise, reprobation, or a mixture of both, were general in their object, and energetic in their operation; and their effects, happy or miserable, evidently must be extensive. The monarchs of the continent, conscious that even moderate and rational liberty was by no means consistent with their own respective governments, regarded with alarm a system, tending not merely to restrain but to crush and annihilate monarchy. Britain declared her resolution not to interfere in the internal affairs of France; but the other sovereigns by no means concurred in disclaiming such intentions; indeed some of them were severally predisposed to a very contrary policy. Since the peace of Werela, a close intercourse had subsisted between Catharine and Gustavus. The ambitious empress, foiled in the expectations with which she had begun the Turkish war, saw a fresh barrier rising against her power in the establishment of Polish independence, which, if suffered to acquire strength and stability, would counteract her future projects; she therefore resolved to crush the new-born freedom. Austria and Prussia only possessed the power of obstructing her designs; and though they were at present upon amicable terms, yet she wished to have a stronger security for the forbearance of their interference: the most effectual, she well knew, would be, if she could occupy them in another quarter. As a sovereign, she was, no doubt, inimical to doctrines so unpalatable to crowned heads, and in some degree entered into the sympathies of her neighbours. But the prevention of republicanism, not very likely to make its way among the slavish boors of Russia, was by no means her principal or immediate object. Concealing, however, her real intentions, she expressed not only the strongest indignation against the French revolutionists, but openly and publicly was the first to declare herself determined

The British government still resolved not to interfere in the internal affairs of France.

Catharine's views respecting Poland.

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to protect and restore the ancient government of France. She applied to the king of Sweden, who very readily listened to her suggestions, and promised to co-operate. Catharine and Gustavus expressed the warmest approbation of the emperor's letter.[a] The empress dispatched a minister to the French princes at Coblentz, assisted them with money, and pressed them to enter on their expedition. Though determined to avoid all active interference herself, she assumed the[b] appearance of the most ardent zeal against the French revolutionists.

Cautious prudence of Leopold.

Leopold proceeded in his plans with a caution and coolness which the more ardent advocates of a counter-revolution considered as dilatory. In

Convention at Pilnitz between the chief powers of Germany.

August 1791 a convention was held at Pilnitz between the emperor, the king of Prussia, and the elector of Saxony. The friends of the French revolution formed an hypothesis that at this meeting a treaty was concluded for two great purposes; the restoration of absolute monarchy, and the dismemberment of the French empire.[c] The real object of this convention is now found to have been to preserve the public tranquillity of Europe, and for that purpose to endeavour, by combined influence, to effectuate the establishment of a moderate and limited monarchy in France. The conference at Pilnitz was attended by the count d'Artois, the Marquis de Bouillé, and Mr. de Calonne. These illustrious exiles and the contracting

The parties disavow hostile in-

sovereigns, stipulated that they would support the

[a] See Chapter xlvii. [b] Bouillé's Memoirs, 457.

[c] On this fiction, the vindicators of France in other countries, and especially in Britain, in conversation, speeches, and writings, during the first five years of the war, rested their principal arguments to prove, that innocent and unoffending friends of liberty and of the human race, were driven by necessity to defend themselves against the confederation of despots which met at Pilnitz. A paper was actually published as an authentic copy of this treaty of Pilnitz, not only supported by no evidence, but carrying, in its intrinsic absurdity, the clearest proofs that it was a forgery. Another fabrication of the same kind was also published as a state paper, and long referred to under the title of the treaty of Pavia. These forgeries are very fully and ably exposed in the Anti-jacobin newspaper, by a writer under the signature of DIRECTOR.

establish-

establishment of order and moderate liberty; and that if the king of France would concur, and other potentates accede, to their designs, they would exert their influence and power to obtain to his Christian majesty freedom of action: Leopold, publishing this engagement, disavowed hostile intentions towards France.

tentions against France.

In the month of September a notification was sent by the French king to all the crowned heads in Europe, that he had accepted the new constitution. Britain sent a very friendly answer: in his reply, Leopold expressed his hopes that this measure might promote the general welfare, remove the fears for the common cause of sovereigns, and prevent the necessity of employing serious precautions against the renewal of licentiousness. The answers of some of the other powers expressed their disbelief of the king's freedom, and therefore forbore any opinion concerning the notification; but the greater number sent friendly replies.[d] In November the emperor sent a note to the different powers of Europe, declaring that he considered the French king as free, and the prevailing party to be disposed to moderate counsels, from which his majesty augured the probable establishment of a regular and just government, and the continuance of tranquillity. But lest the licentious disorders should be renewed, the emperor thought the other powers should hold themselves in a state of observation, and cause to be declared by their respective ministers at Paris, that they would be always ready to support in concert, on the first emergency, the rights of the king and the French monarchy.[e] About the end of November his imperial majesty wrote a note to the king of France declaring that he had no intention to interfere with the affairs of

The French king notifies to foreign princes his acceptance of the new constitution.

Answers of the different powers.

Circular note of the emperor.

[d] See, in State Papers of October and November 1791, the respective answers.

[e] State Papers, November 19th, 1791

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his kingdom as long as the French should leave to their king all the powers [f] which they had voluntarily stipulated, and those which he had voluntarily accepted, in the new constitutional contract. Leopold, indeed, manifested in every part of his proceedings a disposition to maintain peace with the French nation. He discouraged the emigrants, from assembling within his territories to concert projects inimical to the revolutionary government. This conduct was by no means agreeable to the French princes, who strongly expostulated with him on the measures which he was pursuing. The king of Sweden and the empress of Russia strenuously urged both the German potentates to active hostilities [g], but without effect: and long after the meeting at Pilnitz, the princes who conferred proved themselves inclined to peace.

Sweden and Russia urge the German powers to active hostilities, but without effect.

Proceedings in France, Meeting of the second national assembly.

MEANWHILE the second national assembly met in October 1791: having sworn to maintain the constitution of the kingdom decreed by the constituent assembly, they immediately exhibited a specimen of their legislative justice by passing a law to rob the pope of the territory of Avignon, which had been ceded to that prince by the most solemn treaties. This act was a farther illustration of the principle already exemplified by the revolutionists in their aggressions on the German sovereigns, that because France had made a change in her internal constitution, she was also to alter the law of nations according to her convenience or pleasure, and to violate the rights of independent states. Their next project of rapacious injustice was against the bishopric of Basle. [h] Thither they sent commissioners

They conceive internal revolution a reason for changing the law of nations.

[f] This declaration certainly was an interference, as it prescribed bounds beyond which they were not to go in the arrangement of their own affairs.

[g] The Marquis de Bouillé, who was in the confidence of the king of Sweden, quotes several letters which prove Gustavus to have been very anxious to take an active part in the restoration of monarchy; but the zeal of Catharine, he says, never extended beyond professions. Page 457.

[h] See French Journals of the proceedings of the assembly, which the English reader will find with considerable accuracy, in the Gentleman's Magazine,

sioners to settle certain differences which they pretended to have arisen amongst the inhabitants, and between Avignon and Carpentras. They began the system of their operations by instituting a club, and gaining partisans among the people: after massacring the most peaceable and respectable inhabitants, they compelled the remainder to meet, and vote their union with the kingdom of France. The French royalists were forming an army under the prince of Condé; and, from the continued junction of the nobles and their adherents, they were become very numerous. On the 14th of October the assembly decreed, that emigrants thus collected should be from that time considered as traitors against their country; and that, from the 1st of January 1792, such as should be known to be assembled should be punished with death; that all the French princes and public functionaries who should not return before the 1st of January, should be adjudged guilty of the same crimes, and suffer confiscation of their property. The king refused to ratify this decree, but endeavoured to reconcile the exiles to the French government by admonition and persuasion: he repeatedly dispatched letters to all the princes, earnestly intreating them to return: he used his endeavours by a public proclamation, as well as all the private influence he possessed, to recall the emigrants to the bosom of their country, and to retain those who were inclined to emigrate. The French princes, in answer to the king's repeated letters, persisted in their refusal to acknowledge the constitution accepted by the king, and declared their views to be the re-establishment of the Roman catholic religion, and the restoration to the king of his liberty and legislative authority.

Seizure of Avignon.

Operations of the French exiles at Coblentz.

The king urges them to return.

gazine, and the historical substance in the Annual Registers; but in fuller and more minute detail in the Moniteurs.

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The republican party, professing to think that the king secretly instigated the princes, endeavoured to excite in the nation a general mistrust of his intentions; and found their efforts so successful, that they were encouraged to proceed in executing their design of lessening the power of the king, and exalting their own on its ruins. The first step they took for the accomplishment of this end was, by all means to get rid of the usual marks of respect to his majesty's person. On the 6th February 1792, Condorcet, appointed president, was ordered to write a letter to the king, in which he was directed to lay aside the title of "Your Majesty." The lowest rabble were permitted, and even encouraged, to resort to the palace, and revile the royal family in the most gross and profligate terms.

Rapid diminution of the king's power.

THE national character of Frenchmen appeared totally changed: that people which for so many ages had been distinguished for loyalty and religious zeal, now eagerly trampled on every remnant of monarchy or hierarchy. But the change was really much less in the constituents than in the direction of their character. The French nation has ever been distinguished for ardour of sensibility to the passion of the times: whatever objects, prevailing opinions or sentiments proposed, they pursued with an energy, rapidity, and impetuosity, which naturally and necessarily produced excess. In whatever they sought, eager for pre-eminence, they ran into extremes: the same species of character which, in the sixteenth century, took the lead in augmenting the domination of priests, in the seventeenth century in extending the power of kings, in the eighteenth was pre-eminent in enlarging the sway of atheists and levellers. Prompt in invention, and powerful in intelligence; fertile in resources, and energetic in execution, the efforts of the French, whithersoever directed, never failed to be efficacious. Readily susceptible of impres-

General character of the French nation, violent passions, ardour of pursuit, and energy of action.

The same character appears in their religious, loyal, and democratical enthusiasm.

sion, they were alive to sympathy. Sentiments and opinions were very rapidly communicated: what Frenchmen seek, they seek in a body. The same national character which supported the catholic league, and spread the glory and power of Louis XIV. now overthrew the monarchy. To render the king obnoxious, as well as to increase the means of force, the republicans repeated the reports of a confederacy of despots, declared their disbelief of Leopold's pacific professions, and procured a decree of the assembly, demanding satisfaction for the alleged treaty of Pilnitz. The Jacobin clubs, their pamphleteers, journalists, and other agents of confusion and anarchy, rang the changes on the treaty of Pilnitz, and affirmed that there was in the palace a junto, which they called an Austrian committee; and of which De Gessan, the king's minister for foreign affairs, was alleged to be a leading member. At a public trial of one of the journalists for asserting the existence of such a committee, he could bring no proof to support his assertion; nor was there ever any evidence adduced to give the smallest colour to the allegation. The royalists now counteracted the designs of the republicans with openness and boldness; they formed several projects for rescuing the king through the agency of Danton, and some other outrageous democrats, who manifested a disposition to betray their cause, if they found treachery more lucrative than their present violent adherence. Danton, that furious republican, received a hundred thousand [i] crowns for supporting motions really favourable to the king, though professedly inimical; but finding the resources of the court inadequate to his desires, resumed his republicanism. It is also affirmed that Brissot offered to betray his cause for a large sum of money, but that the court being either unwilling or unable to afford the bribe required [k] by this

Progress of republicanism.

Intrigues between the royalists and republican leaders from the emptiness of the royal coffers are unavailing.

[i] See Playfair's History of Jacobinism.

[k] Ibid.

patriot,

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patriot, he persevered in his republican [1] career. A plan was concerted for effecting the king's escape to the coast of Normandy, which province was attached to his majesty. His flight, it is believed, would have been practicable; but the character of the king, mild and benevolent, without active enterprise, was little fitted to profit by these opportunities. His departure from Paris would, he thought, annihilate the monarchical constitution which he had sworn to protect; and expose all his adherents, declared or even suspected throughout France, to the infuriate cruelty of dominant licentiousness. From these considerations the king refused to attempt his escape. Understanding reports to have been circulated that he was projecting to leave Paris; to contradict these he wrote a letter to the national assembly, in which he fully explained his sentiments, views, and intentions. [m] The friends of the king, and even of limited monarchy, regretted his unwillingness to venture any step that might rescue him from a situation in which he was so degraded and insulted. They conceived that the object was well worthy of the risk; and that the danger of flight was only doubtful, whereas the danger of continuance was, if not immediate, at least certain. Of the emigrants, the princes desired the restitution of the old government, but the majority of the exiled nobles and gentry desired the establishment of a moderate and limited monarchy. Foreign powers were also divided on this subject. Russia, Spain, and Sweden, proposed to restore the ancient monarchy. Prussia was somewhat favourable to this opinion, but would not interfere actively without the co-operation of Leopold. The emperor continued friendly to peace until the con-

The king refuses to attempt his escape.

Different views of the emigrant princes and of the nobles;

of foreign potentates.

[1] Persons thoroughly acquainted with Brissot, declare that avarice was no part of his character; and, as Mr. Playfair brings no proofs of his assertion, disbelieve it as improbable.

[m] State Papers, February 17th, 1792.

duct

duct of the French government proved to him its determination to disturb tranquillity. They still withheld satisfaction for their usurpations in Lorrain and Alsace. They threatened with hostility the elector of Treves, and alleged various pretexts for their displeasure; but chiefly, his expression of doubts respecting the freedom of the king, and permission given to French emigrants to assemble in his dominions. French troops having approached the frontiers of Treves, and menacing his territories, the elector applied for protection to the emperor. This prince, as head of the Germanic body, proposed to the other princes of the empire an extensive plan of defensive confederation, for mutual and reciprocal security against French aggression, and ordered marshal Bender to march to the defence of Treves. The French government, in a style rather menacing than conciliatory, demanded an explanation of the emperor's intentions. The answer of Leopold, though firm, was still pacific, and disavowed every intention of aggressive hostility. Meanwhile the emperor died very suddenly [n] at Vienna. Francis, his son and successor, declared his intention to persevere in the pacific plan of his father, but to be prepared for defensive war. The French government categorically demanded a declaration of Francis's intentions, and received a reply announcing the existence of a concert for the purposes of defence, but not invasion. As the discussion proceeded, it became progressively more hostile [o], and both sides prepared for war. Catharine, operating on the heroic mind of the Swedish king Gustavus, had induced him, so early as the summer of 1791, to join in a project for the relief of

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Disputes between the French government, and the elector of Treves.

The princes of the empire, headed by the emperor, and supported by Prussia, form a confederacy for defending their rights.

Sudden death of the emperor.

[n] After an illness of two days, which by many was ascribed to poison; but there was never any proof of this assertion.

[o] See State Papers, from January to March 1792. Correspondence between the ambassadors and ministers of France and Austria, at Paris and Vienna; especially the letters to and from Count Kaunitz.

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Louis, even if the emperor and Prussia kept aloof; and Spain soon after had acceded to this design. Gustavus, betaking himself to Coblentz, conferred with the exiled princes and nobility; and, encouraged by Catharine, prepared an army which he was to head. He consulted Leopold and Frederic William, but found both unwilling to embark in so very hazardous a project. He, however, made dispositions for proceeding in his undertaking without their co-operation, and was preparing to conduct an armament which would make a descent on the coast of France, and co-operate[p] with the royalists, when, on the 16th of March 1792, being at a masquerade in his capital, from the hands of Ankerstroem, a disaffected nobleman, who, with others, had plotted against his life, he received a wound which proved mortal. He for twelve days languished in agonising pain; but retaining the use of his faculties, very ably and completely arranged his affairs; left wise and beneficial directions to his youthful son, and breathed his last on the 28th of March, in the forty-eighth year of his age, and twenty-first of his reign[q]; a prince for genius and heroism rarely surpassed, and not often equalled, even in the glorious annals of Swedish kings. The confederacy of princes which Gustavus and Catharine first proposed for modelling the government of France, without regard to the voice of the people, did not actually take place, yet a different concert, originating chiefly in the imperious and violent conduct of France herself, was unavoidably formed. Dumourier, now foreign minister, in dictatorial terms required both from the courts of Berlin and Vienna the disavowal of any concert inimical to France, and the discontinuance of protection to the French emigrants. The answers of Prussia and Austria

Preparation of the king of Sweden.

Assassination of that heroic prince.

The French government demands of Austria and Prussia the disavowal of a concert hostile to France.

[p] Bouillé, chapters xii. and xiii.

[q] On the sudden fall of these two princes, Tom Paine exultingly observed, "See how kings are melting away!"

proposed

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proposed a general principle as the basis of tranquillity; *that the French should not consider themselves, as from their revolution, entitled to violate the rights of other powers.* They therefore stated three subjects, on which they demanded satisfaction; first, that a compensation should be given to the princes possessioned in Lorraine and Alsace. Secondly, that satisfaction should be rendered to the pope for the county of Avignon. Thirdly, that the government of France should have a sufficient power to repress whatever might give uneasiness to other states.[r] Dumourier replied, that the king of Hungary had no concern in these discussions, repeated in still stronger terms the demand of the French government, and denounced war unless the answer was categorical and speedy. The two German potentates, adhering to their former replies, the national assembly, on the 20th of April, declared war against the king of Hungary and Bohemia[s], and soon after, against the king of Prussia. In the decree, denouncing hostilities, the national assembly repeated the imputation of a hostile confederacy against the liberties of France. The court of Vienna, in its counter manifesto[t], disavowed as before, all offensive intentions. The princes of the German empire had formed a concert for reciprocal protection against the unjust pretensions of France, which had considered her internal changes as reasons for deviations from the faith of foreign treaties. The king of Prussia, as member of the confederation for securing Germany against the aggressions of France, declared himself compelled to take an active share in the war. But besides the defensive objects avowed by Francis, the king of Prussia's manifesto declared, that one of his purposes was to put an end to anarchy in France, to establish a legal power on the

Basis of tranquillity proposed by Francis and Frederic William.

French declare war against Austria and Prussia.

Counter declaration.

[r] See State Papers, April 5th, 1792.
[s] State Papers, April 20th, 1792.
[t] State Papers, July 5th, 1792.

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essential basis of a monarchical form, and thus give security to other governments against the incendiary attempts and efforts of a frantic troop. [u] Thus the repression of French principles was the chief object which, by his own avowal, induced the king of Prussia to join in hostilities against France; while the protection of the Germanic empire was ostensibly the principal motive of Francis. From the time that Leopold and Frederic William had concluded their alliance, they had joined in deeming the duke of Brunswick, the fittest general for directing the force of the defensive confederacy. An intercourse had been opened between them confidentially on this subject; and the duke was fully apprised, and approved of the enterprize of Leopold.

The duke of Brunswick is appointed general of the combined armies of Germany.

When, from the aggression and declaration of France, war was become absolutely necessary, his serene highness accepted the command, and preparations were made for opening the campaign with the combined forces.

Preparations of France, and distribution of the armies.

IMMEDIATELY after the declaration of war by France, the French forces were set in motion. The king had established four armies, in order to protect and cover his country, and to be in readiness to act as the existing circumstances might direct. The first army was assembled on the northern confines of France, under the command of the marshal de Rochambeau, an experienced officer, who had served in the French armies during the American war. This force was destined to cover the frontier towards the Austrian Netherlands, from the German Ocean at Dunkirk, to Maubeuge, in French Hainault, with their right extending to the Meuse. The marquis de la Fayette, appointed to command the second army, fixed his head-quarters at Metz, and occupied Nancy, Thionville, and Lupeville. By this means was the cordon extended from the

[u] See State Papers, July 24th, 1792.

banks

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banks of the Meuse to the Moselle, and retained in check the important fortress of Luxemburg. The third army was formed on the Rhine, under Luckner, and extended from Landau, by Strasburg, towards Montbeliard, and the pass of Porentrui into Switzerland. The possession of this important defile, aided by the favourable position of the mountains of Jura, rendered the extensive frontier of Franche Compte entirely safe. A fourth army was assembled on the side of Savoy, to watch the motions of the king of Sardinia, who was expected to join the hostile confederacy. The army of the north, commanded by Rochambeau, amounted to above fifteen thousand men; the centre army, commanded by La Fayette, to seventeen thousand; the army of the Rhine, to about twenty-two thousand; the fourth, to twelve thousand men. The reduction of the Low Countries was the object of this campaign; and the disaffection to the house of Austria still subsisting in the provinces, afforded probable expectations of success. The army under Rochambeau occupied the direct road to Brussels, without any impediment but the garrison of Mons. Fayette commanded the county of Namur, and the navigation of the Meuse; but the armies were found very imperfectly provided and disciplined: the French soldiers were deficient in military experience, in ammunition, and stores of every sort. Many of the officers warmly attached to the king were not eager in promoting a cause which they by no means deemed the cause of their sovereign. The war was begun with an attack on the cities of Mons and Tournay; but the soldiers being impressed with an idea that they were betrayed by their generals, retreated in great confusion; in their savage rage they murdered several officers, and among the rest Dillon, the lieutenant-general. They trampled upon his body, and having lighted a fire, threw the corpse into the flames. The infuriated soldiers

The French invade the Austrian Netherlands.

Their first operations are desultory and unsuccessful.

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danced round the remains of their commander: so ferocious and hardened had they become from the influence of the revolutionary enthusiasm. Rochambeau, finding the army totally loosened from subordination and all honourable principles of duty, resigned in the highest disgust. Luckner, appointed commander of the army of the north, found the troops in a much worse situation than even his predecessor had represented. La Fayette made the same complaints of the unprovided state of the force entrusted to his command, as deficient in camp equipage, artillery, ammunition, and stores of every kind: in short, at the commencement of the war the armies of the French government were in so very unprovided a state, as could hardly arise even from negligence, without the co-operation of treachery. In such a condition of the forces it was found necessary, if not to abandon, to postpone the invasion of the Austrian Netherlands, until discipline were better established, magazines formed, and other dispositions made, proper for a campaign.

Unprovided state of their armies

is imputed to treachery.

Dispositions of government to remedy this defect.

THE Austrian force then in the Netherlands was not very considerable; and during the months of May and June the operations of both sides were desultory and unimportant. On the 3d of July, the duke of Brunswick arrived at Coblentz, with the first division of the Prussian army, and in the course of the month being joined by fresh troops, he prepared to commence the campaign. His serene highness, with very great talents, the deepest military skill, and eminent political abilities, is extremely diffident. [x] From that cause, joined to a gentle and delicate disposition, he frequently treated very inferior capacities with excessive deference, and did not with sufficient vigour maintain in deliberation the dictates of his own excellent understanding. Fitted

The duke of Brunswick arrives at Coblentz.

[x] This is the account given of him by various gentlemen who have visited Germany.

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to lead in council and in war, in the former the duke of Brunswick too frequently followed. In concerting the plan of the campaign of 1792, he left the formation chiefly to Francis and Frederic William. These princes were impressed with an opinion, so naturally adopted, and studiously spread by the emigrants, that the greater number of Frenchmen were attached to the old government, and would join the standard of monarchy if they found themselves properly supported; and on this supposition they formed the plan of the campaign. It was proposed that the duke of Brunswick should set out from Coblentz with an army of Prussians, fifty thousand strong, and march by Treves and Luxemburg to Longvy. After reducing this fortress, and also, if possible, Montmedi, the next object was to establish magazines, continue the march, and invest Verdun. In support of these, as well as of subsequent operations, the court of Vienna engaged to bring into the field two armies; the one to act between the Rhine and the Moselle, and to be of sufficient strength for the purpose of at once menacing Landau and Saar-Louis, and carrying on the siege of Thionville; while the other, of much superior force, should be engaged in the Low Countries: their positions were to be as near the Meuse as possible. Should the expectations of a general rise in France be disappointed, the duke of Brunswick was not to cross the river with his main body, but to detach a considerable portion of his army to co-operate with the Austrians in French Hainault, in reducing Verdun, Sedan, and Meziers. Thus the allies establishing themselves upon the French frontier, would be able to winter in security, and commence the following campaign with great advantage. To oppose this invading force, the entrenched camp at Maubeuge, and another at Maulde; with the strong fortress of Valenciennes, formed the principal points of defence on the part of the French.

The allied powers misinformed concerning the disposition of the French nation.

Under this misinformation they concert the plan of the campaign.

They propose to invade France, and restore monarchy.

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Manifesto of the duke of Brunswick,

Previous to the march of the duke of Brunswick, a manifesto was composed under the authority, and according to the sentiments of Francis, now emperor of Germany, and the king of Prussia; proclaiming the objects of these two princes in their projected invasion, and issued in the name of the duke of Brunswick, commander-in-chief of the expedition. This celebrated manifesto was founded on the same misinformation concerning the disposition of the French themselves, in which the plan of the campaign had originated. The proclamation declared, that the intention of the combined princes was neither to conquer any part of France, nor to interfere with the internal government of that kingdom, but simply to deliver the king and queen from captivity. It invited all the French soldiers and other Frenchmen, to join the combined army in executing this design, promised protection and security to all who should accept these proffers; and denounced vengeance against the persons and property of all who should oppose the efforts of the confederates. It declared the present governors responsible for every evil that should accrue to the country from their refractory resistance; called on the people to submit to their sovereign, and promised to intercede with the king to grant his gracious pardon to penitent offenders. It warned other towns, but especially the city of Paris, that if they refused to comply, they should be delivered up to military execution. This proclamation was extremely unwise in its principles and tenor, and no less hurtful in its effects. The hopes of co-operation which the invaders might reasonably entertain, rested on the divisions which subsisted in France. The parties continued reducible to four general classes; first, the royalists or abettors of the old government, votaries of an absolute power, much more slavish than the most bigotted English tory of the seventeenth century would practically endure.

threatens more than its authors can execute.

Unwise and hurtful to the cause.

State of parties in France.

Secondly,

Secondly, the feuillants, votaries of limited monarchy, desiring a mixture of liberty and order, and not much differing from English whigs. Thirdly, the constitutionalists, a still numerous, though decreasing body, friendly to the system which had been established by the late national assembly. Fourthly, the republicans, with great diversity of particular scheme, but concurring in desiring the total abolition of monarchy. If skilful means had been employed to unite the three former parties in defence of monarchy, perhaps the republicans and jacobins might have been repressed. The proclamation tended to unite those who were before divided; and by requiring implicit submission to the king, and declaring that all constitutional changes should originate in his will, it inculcated principles which only the slavish class would admit; and which every monarchical votary of liberty must reject as indignantly as the most outrageous jacobin; besides, it not only was contrary to the sentiments of every French friend of liberty, but of every French supporter of national independence. Two foreign sovereigns declared themselves judges between the members of the French internal government. It could not be reasonably expected that the national spirit of a Frenchman would suffer such an assumption of power by Germans. This manifesto in its effects most materially injured the cause which its framers professed to promote: it afforded a simple and comprehensive principle of union in the abhorrence of despotism to be imposed by foreign powers: and combined the friends of moderate and rational liberty, with the most furious partizans of uncontrouled licentiousness. By inducing many to believe that the king approved its sentiments and principles, it rendered his personal safety insecure; and hurried the downfal of the kingly power in France. It totally deviated from the defensive system which the emperor had

The manifesto combines diversity of sentiments into unanimous determination to resist foreign interference.

hurries the downfal of kingly power,

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and completely defeats the purposes of its framers.

professed to support, and appeared to justify the imputation of a concert of kings to crush Gallic liberty. Instead of intimidating, it enraged the French nation: threats, without the power of execution, recoiled in indignant scorn upon the menacers. The apprehension of a confederacy formed to dictate to an independent nation the plan of internal government which it should adopt, roused the pride of Frenchmen, and turned the energy of their character to military efforts, invincible in defence, and as it afterwards proved, irresistible in attack.

Proceedings at Paris.

MEANWHILE proceedings at Paris were hastening the destruction of monarchy, and in effect co-operating with the dictatorial menaces of the confederated invaders. The friends of monarchy absolute or limited, fast continued to emigrate: the king was forced to dismiss ministers of his own choice, and to receive republicans [y] in their place. The principal direction was possessed by the jacobin clubs: their system of government was simple and obvious, to overawe and overrule the legislative assembly by the national guards, and the mob of Paris, nor did they seem to have any greater or more fixed object in the exercise of their power, than the subversion of all order, and the confusion of all property. There still remained a diversity of condition, notwithstanding all their advances in the levelling system. The proprietors of estates, the merchants, and the manufacturers, were in a better situation than their respective day-labourers, and also than many others, who though possessing no property, did not choose to be labourers. The disposition to idleness was greatly increased by the

[y] They consisted of members of a party known by the name of Girondists; from the Gironde department, along the banks of the Garonne, which district the principal members of this party represented. They had been constitutionalists, but were now become republicans, though less violent in their professions than the Jacobins. Among the Girondists were the chief literary men in France.

revolution:

revolution: many of the inhabitants of Paris had chiefly subsisted by the employment which they received from the nobility and other landed proprietors. These sources no longer flowing, numbers became idle from want of industrious occupation. The sovereignty of the mob was not friendly to productive industry; it could not reasonably be expected, that men taught to conceive themselves kings would vouchsafe to dig ditches or pave the streets. Besides, these sovereigns, even if disposed to manual labour, had no time to spare. They were engaged in politics: hence a very numerous body of citizens, who before their elevation had been useful handicraftsmen, were now, in their sovereign capacity, extremely idle, and extremely poor; and as the new liberty included an exemption from moral and religious restraint, they were also extremely profligate. To the poverty of the idle and profligate, order and tranquillity, which preclude them from their principal means of subsistence, are naturally obnoxious. The meanest and most beggarly citizens sought a more general equalization of property, and assumed the supreme executive authority. A ragged coat was deemed an honourable testimony of the wearer's political principles; the lowest rabble, denominated from their dress sans-culottes, or ragamuffins, took a lead in public affairs. The national guards were now become somewhat moderate: the jacobin club, the sans-culottes, and the violent republicans of every kind, determined that an army should be formed, composed of twenty thousand men, under the controul of the republicans. Without any order from the king, the war-minister proposed that the desired force should be raised and encamped under the walls of Paris. The assembly, to gratify the sans-culottes, passed the decree: under the same influence they also enacted another law against refractory priests. The king firmly refused

Decrees for raising a jacobin army, and punishing refractory priests.

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The king refuses his sanction.

fused to sanction these laws, which were respectively inimical to his executive authority, and to justice. The republican ministers urged their master, not without threats, to comply with the desire of the people; but his majesty with becoming dignity dismissed these insolent servants. These and other republicans, as the decree was not passed, embodied a jacobin army for themselves. An immense multitude assembled from different quarters of Paris, and, armed with pikes, axes, swords, muskets, and artillery, marched in a body, on the 20th of June, towards the Thuilleries, that they might force the king to sanction the two decrees. Appearing before the palace, they demanded admittance, and the gates being thrown open, the rabble violently entered into the apartment of their king. His majesty received this banditti with calmness and moderation; but though not without a dread of being assassinated; he firmly refused to comply with their insolent demands. The fury of the mob at length subsided, and they departed without effecting their purposes. Numbers of the populace who had not been engaged in the outrage, expressed their indignation against the rioters, and their admiration of the king's courage and conduct; and the various other parties were extremely incensed against the jacobins. The new minister for the home department taking advantage of this disposition, published a proclamation on the subject of the recent tumult, which gave such satisfaction, that many of the departments sent addresses to the king and to the national assembly, demanding that the authors and abettors of the insurrection might be punished with the utmost severity. It appeared on enquiry that Petion the mayor, and Manuel the procurator, might have easily either prevented or quelled this insurrection; they were therefore both suspended from their offices. The constitutionalists highly approved of this sentence, which the royalists

royalists thought too moderate, while the jacobins breathed vengeance against the punishers of a magistrate who instigated insurrection. La Fayette, finding the tide of popular opinion to run somewhat less against monarchy, repaired to Paris to remonstrate concerning the late outrages; but he possessed neither ability, decision, nor intrepidity to intimidate his enemies; firmness or consistency to give confidence to his friends. After being favourably received by the constitutionalists, he was severely censured by the Girondists and jacobins, for leaving the army without permission, and attempting to govern the assembly by intimidation. He left Paris privately; commissaries were sent from the assembly to arrest the general; he gave orders to have these deputies apprehended; finding however no disposition in his army to afford him support, he withdrew in the night to Liege; there falling into the hands of the enemy, and refusing to join the standard of the French princes, he was sent a prisoner to Namur.

La Fayette repairs to Paris,

but is obliged to fly;

he leaves the French army and surrenders to the Austrians.

Intelligence now reached Paris, that the combined armies were preparing to take the field; the national assembly endeavoured to inspire the people with an enthusiastic eagerness to oppose a confederation of despots; and with the assistance of the jacobin clubs they were successful. They decreed the country to be in danger, and published two addresses [z], the one to the people of France, the other to the army, which were skilfully adapted to their respective objects, powerfully stimulated the enthusiasm of both; and demonstrated that however deficient the republican leaders might be in virtuous principles, they could ably call into action the passions and energies of men. They soon issued a decree, declaring that all citizens qualified to bear arms should be in a state of perfect activity. By

French enthusiasm on the approach of the combined armies.

[z] See State Papers, July 1792.

this

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this measure the whole order of things was completely changed; and the French became a nation of soldiers. The German potentates threatening the subjugation of a powerful people, drove the objects of their invasion to the ferocious energy of a military democracy. On the 14th of July, vast bodies of federates arrived in the metropolis, at the invitation of the jacobin leaders, to celebrate the third anniversary of the revolution. Among others a troop from Marseilles repaired to Paris, to participate of the uproar and confusion, which they expected to arise from the celebration. They happened to arrive too late for the anniversary, but in sufficient time to produce disorder and tumult. They rendered their first homage to Petion, who was now restored to his office, and were received with great kindness by that magistrate, whose duty it was to drive them from the metropolis. They commenced their operations with attacking a party of national guards who were dining at a tavern, and whom they supposed to be attached to the king; killing one and wounding five, they paid their respects to the national assembly[a]; and were very graciously received by the republicans. Visiting the jacobins they partook of the fraternal embrace, and were admitted members of the club. Small as the qualification of voters denominated active citizens was, yet the number of those who were not included was very great, and fast increasing from prevalent idleness and profligacy. These, consisting of beggars, vagabonds, and the meanest classes of ruffians, thieves, robbers, and assassins, under the name of *passive citizens*, assumed to themselves the chief portion of the executive power, in the exercise of which they were instigated and guided by their friends of the jacobin clubs. The passive citizens most joyfully received the Marseillois strangers,

Anniversary of the 14th of July.

The Marseillois.

Passive citizens.

[a] Otridge's Annual Register, 1792, chap. xi.

strangers, as a co-ordinate estate, but which was soon consolidated into one body with themselves, and their supporters, while the jacobins by their affiliations, and adherents, governed the whole mass. The republicans, now denominated the mountain, because they occupied the higher benches in the assembly-room, began to govern the legislature, and from this time the acts of the national assembly are to be considered as the acts of the jacobins. They proceeded in their efforts for destroying regal power; they imputed the king's refusal to sanction the two decrees, to a correspondence with the exiles and the enemy. His majesty having in a letter expressed his reprobation of the duke of Brunswick's manifesto, the assembly would not suffer this expression of his sentiments to be communicated to the public. On the third of August Petion demanded in the name of the forty-eight sections into which Paris was divided, that the king should be excluded from the throne, and that the management of affairs should be entrusted to responsible ministers, until a new king should be chosen by a national convention; and on the 7th of August, Collot d'Herbois, a play-actor, headed a great body of passive citizens, who made the same demand to the national assembly. They were answered that the assembly would take the requisition into consideration. The king, informed of these proceedings addressed a proclamation to the people of France, stating his own conduct and its reasons; the malicious artifices by which it was misrepresented; the situation of affairs; the union and vigour required at the present crisis [b]; but the assembly studiously prevented the proclamation from being dispersed. On the 9th day of August [c], the day appointed for considering the proposed deposition of the king,

The Mayor of Paris in the name of his constituents, demands the deposition of the king.

[b] State Papers, 17th of August, 1792.
[c] Annual Register 1792, chap. xi.

bodies

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bodies of armed men surrounded the assembly-hall, menaced[d] and insulted the members whom they conceived inimical to the republican proposition: As an insurrection was threatened, the constitutional party urged Petion to employ the municipal force in preventing tumult; but no precautions were adopted. At midnight the tocsin sounded, the Marseillois, joined by other insurgents, marched with such arms as they could collect, towards the Thuilleries. The council of state made vigorous and prudent dispositions for repelling the attack. The Swiss guards, amounting to about a thousand, joined by other loyal and gallant men, formed themselves to resist the insurgents. In the morning the banditti broke in[e]; and the officers of the household encouraged the valiant defenders of the king: at first the brave champions of their sovereign repulsed the insurgents, but the rebels having corrupted the national guards, the gallant Swiss were overpowered and fell under the murderous hands of the banditti. The king was strongly importuned to send for a large body of Swiss guards stationed near Paris, which joining their heroic countrymen, by steady and disciplined valour might have repelled the infuriate assassins. But the virtues of Louis were not those that were most fitted for encountering the very arduous situations in which he was placed. His gentle disposition was averse to the employment of greater force, as it must cause the farther effusion of blood. In his case wisdom dictated and self-preservation required stern and unyielding firmness; desperate resolution might perhaps have extricated him from his humiliating state; concession to so infuriate atrocity, was certain destruction. Louis, still hoping to preserve his family, sought refuge from the national assembly,

Proceedings of the 10th of August.

A banditti assault the Thuilleries.

Valour of the Swiss guards; they are overpowered and massacred by the savage mob;

[d] Clery, page 4.

[e] See a very interesting and pathetic detail of these dreadful atrocities in Clery's journal, page 2 to 16.

the

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the royal family carried prisoners to the temple.

Deposition of the king.

Plan of provisionary government drawn up by Brissot.

Manifestoes to the French people, and to foreign powers.

the rulers of which, he well knew were seeking his ruin. The royal captives were now confined in the Temple; the palace which they had left became a scene of pillage, carnage, and desolation. The jacobins, elated with their victory, proceeded to the deposition of the king; and on the 10th of August a decree was passed, suspending him from his royal functions, and retaining him as an hostage in the hands of the nation. Brissot, one of the chief supporters of this revolution, proposed a provisionary government until a national convention assembling should determine whether the king was to be restored or dethroned. The executive power was to be lodged in a council of the jacobin ministers lately displaced. Brissot wrote a manifesto addressed to citizens, and a declaration addressed to foreign powers, justifying the decree of the 10th of August; these papers were dexterously executed, and conveyed a high idea of the ingenuity of the author; skilfully various in its efforts; the declaration to his own countrymen appealed to all their prejudices, and feelings, and passions; and through the very susceptibility of their minds, imposed on their judgment; his memorial to foreign nations employed plausible sophistry to mislead their understandings, as he could hope for less sympathy from their hearts. The first manifesto is misrepresentation in the shape of impressive eloquence; the second in the form of logical deduction; and both show the author to have in a high degree united declamation and subtlety. While thus exerting himself for the dethronement and imprisonment of the king, this patriot was said to be carrying on a correspondence for betraying the republican party, by suffering the king to escape; but it was alleged that the bribe which he required, half a million sterling, was more than the royal coffers could afford.[1]

[1] See Playfair's Jacobinism.

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THE municipality or common council of Paris, which had been lately constituted and was composed of the very dregs of the people, assumed a large share of the direction of public affairs. By their influence the chief acts of the deliberative body were determined, and through their protection and operation the executive government in a considerable degree was administered. A party of these appearing as the deputies of the people, at the bar of the assembly, demanded in the name of the people, that a national convention should be immediately called. The assembly received these counsellors very graciously, and in obedience to their mandates, resolved to invite the French to form a national convention.

Plan of a convention.

A PLAN of a convention drawn up by the Brissotines, was disseminated and recommended through the nation. Meanwhile the jacobins and the sansculotte rabble proceeded in their operations. Hitherto they had not entirely crushed the ecclesiastics, or eradicated christianity, but they rapidly proceeded in the attempt. All who continued to refuse perjury were by an act of the assembly ordered to quit the kingdom. The Council General next ordered, that all the vessels, images, and other moveables in the churches of Paris, whether gold or silver, should be sent to the mint; the church bells were turned into cannon. From monuments of religion they proceeded to monuments of monarchy: the brazen statues of the princes were converted into ordnance, and thus, it was said, were drawn over from the cause of tyranny to the cause of liberty. The next object after religion and monarchy was property. Confiscation hitherto grasping lands had not extended its rapicity in an equal degree to moveables. To supply this deficiency, they instituted what they called *domiciliary visits*, officers employed by the municipality, and accompanied by *passive citizens*,

Persecution of the unyielding priests.

Church plate is sent to the mint, and the bells are turned into cannon.

Domiciliary visits.

citizens, visited private houses, to search for arms, for refractory priests, or other aristocrats. According to their good pleasure they plundered the houses, arrested or even hanged the owners. Brissot, in his professional capacity as editor of a newspaper, very strongly recommended and ardently promoted these *domiciliary visits*: Petion as mayor was still more effectually active: nor was Danton, as minister of justice, wanting with his assistance. He proposed, and by threats extorted a decree, for *walking commissaries*, who were to co-operate with the domiciliary visitors. Whoever should refuse to give up his arms, or to serve in the army at the requisition of the said commissaries, was to be declared a traitor and punished with death, without any further enquiry. The visitors and commissaries did not murder all those whose houses they inspected; but in many instances contented themselves with sending the owners to dungeons. The prisons were become extremely full; the rulers thought it expedient to rid themselves of the captives by stirring the populace to another insurrection and massacre. For this purpose it was alleged, that as the duke of Brunswick's approach would compel the majority of the inhabitants to take the field, it would be dangerous to leave the prisons so full of aristocrats and suspected persons. By these representations the murderous rabble was easily excited to assassination. On the 2d of September the tocsin was sounded, the cannon of alarm were fired; and bands of ruffians were sent to the different prisons. They commenced their carnage with priests; two hundred and forty-four clergymen were murdered before the evening. The assassins from the ministers of religion, proceeded to the gallant defenders of fallen monarchy, and murdered the Swiss officers, that having been spared at the last massacre were now in prison.

Walking commissaries.

Massacres of September.

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From these murders the savages betook themselves to more indiscriminate barbarity, searched the common prisons and even hospitals, butchered felons, sick, and lunatics[g], as well as those who were charged with disaffection to government.

Atrocious barbarity towards the princess Lamballe.

Among the cases which most strongly mark the enormous depravity of those brutalised barbarians, none can exceed the massacre of the princess Lamballe: this lady sprung from the house of Savoy, was distinguished for personal charms, and a character at once amiable and estimable, and had been superintendant of the queen's household. Married to a man whom she loved, she had been deprived of her husband, through the duke of Orleans[h]; and was now principally distinguished for her ardent and invincible attachment to her royal mistress, and her detestation of her husband's murderer. She with other attendants on her queen had been sent to prison on the 10th of August; the murderers, about eight in the morning of the 3d of September, entered the apartment in which this unfortunate lady was immured. They offered to save her life, if she would fabricate charges against the queen. The heroic princess returned a resolute negative: they demanded that she should take the oath of liberty and equality, also an oath of hatred to the king, to the queen, and to royalty; the first she consented to take, but refused the last: an assassin said, Swear, or you are a dead woman; she looked in his face but made no reply. In an instant she was assassinated with pikes and bayonets; her cloathes were torn off, and the naked corpse exposed to the most abominable insults. With religion, justice, order, and humanity, decency and modesty fled. The head and body of the massacred lady were exposed before the windows of the royal captives, with every circumstance of bruta-

[g] See Annual Register for 1792, chap. iii.
[h] See this volume, p. 74.

lism,

lism, that diabolical malignity maddened to frenzy could suggest.[1] The murders continued for a week; in which time the numbers of the massacred exceeded five thousand. Meanwhile the elections of the national convention were carried on under the influence of this terrible system. A circular letter from the municipality of Paris, countersigned by Danton was sent to all the other municipalities, required the approbation of the whole people to the massacres, and even recommended them to imitation; and under such controul the election proceeded. The clergy were banished; the higher and the most honourable of the nobility had fled, or fallen by the hands of the assassins; the royal family in prison expected their fate; all who favoured royalty or distinction of rank were held in abhorrence, and those who had been called passive as well as the active citizens had been declared to be eligible to all honours and offices of the state. The convention was chiefly chosen from the most violent and desperate republicans in the kingdom. The members assembled on the 20th of September; and the next day they sanctioned the law for abolishing royalty. Having thus proscribed monarchy, and established what they termed the French republic, their next object was, to prepare for the murder of their dethroned king.

Meeting of the national convention.

WHILE the French were thus occupied, their proceedings and projects afforded the highest satisfaction to democratic republicans in other countries. From England many individuals flocked to Paris, as the centre of liberty and happiness. The societies eagerly transmitted their approbation of the French revolutionists; during the successive degradations of monarchy they had in their own country published their applause of its invaders, but when the acts of the 10th of August had deposed

English societies address the convention with congratulations of praise;

[1] See Otridge's Register, 1792.

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and imprisoned the king, murdered his defenders, and prostrated his power; when the busy week of September, extending the massacre of aristocrats, shed the blood of the nobility, gentry, and clergy; when the national convention doing honour to its own composition, had abolished the kingly office, the English societies eagerly testified their joy and congratulations on the success of those with whose principles they declared their own to coincide, and with whose feelings they avowed the most cordial sympathy. The chief democratical clubs of England, were then *the Revolution Club; the Society for Constitutional Information; both in London: and the London Corresponding Society, affiliated with divers places through the kingdom.* The address of the first to the national convention, the shortest of the three, restricted its applause to the 10th of August; augured happiness from the establishment of a republic on the downfal of monarchy; repeated the opinions of the late Dr. Price; to refresh the memory of revolutionists concerning the treatment of dethroned kings, alluded to the history of Charles I.; and expressed their hopes that peace and constant alliance should be established between Britain and the French republic. The address of the society for *constitutional information* approved of the deposition of the king; expressed hopes that the *same doctrines would be received, and the same example generally followed in other countries.* Having declared their sentiments in the most pompous phraseology, they accompanied their eloquence with a donation of shoes[k]; but the most explicit of the addresses was the production of the London Corresponding Society, and its affiliated friends; which praising the successive and various proceedings of the French

accompany their commendations with a gift of shoes.

The corresponding society by its secretary

[k] The conveyance of these shoes was entrusted to Mr. John Frost, attorney, who having attained notoriety by professional achievements, had become a very zealous reformer.

repub-

republicans, reprobated the policy and constitution of Britain.[1] This address subscribed by Thomas Hardy shoemaker, and Maurice Margarot knife-grinder, stated divers and manifold blessings which Britons might attain by following the counsels of the said Thomas Hardy, shoemaker, Maurice Margarot, knife-grinder, and other politicans equally enlightened, instead of being guided by those who had so long governed Britain: the sentiments of the corresponding society devoted openly to the cause of mankind, existed, they were convinced, in the hearts of all the free men of England; they enjoyed by anticipation and with a common hope, that epoch (not far distant), when the interests of Europe and of mankind, should invite the two nations to stretch out the hand of fraternity. The convention received the addresses with very great satisfaction, and strongly expressed their expectations of a similar change in England, and their confident hopes, that they speedily would have an opportunity of congratulating their corresponding friends, on a national convention established in England: the convention conferred the honour of citizenship on various individuals belonging to other countries, and some of the departments chose for their representative such Englishmen as they conceived proper delegates for expressing their doctrines and sentiments. Of these the most noted was Thomas Paine, and the most eminent was Dr. Priestley; this gentleman was so greatly pleased with the two-fold honours conferred on him, by being thus naturalised by the anarchists, and even deemed worthy of a place in their convention, that he wrote letters both to the convention and individual members, manifesting and declaring the warmest approbation of their principles, as displayed in

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1792. Thomas Hardy shoemaker invites the French republic to fraternity with Britain.

The convention believes the boasts of such reformers, that they speak the voice of the British nation.

[1] See the respective addresses, Appendix of Otridge's Annual Register, 1792, pages 70, 72, 73.

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the suppression of monarchy and the privileged orders, and the whole series of revolutionary proceedings: though his age and other circumstances prevented him from acceping a seat himself, he with the greatest thankfulness and joy accepted it for his son. The convention flattered with the approbation of one whom they conceived to be as great in political philosophy, as he really was in physical, ordered his letter to be transcribed into their records, as a testimony of the applause bestowed by foreign illumination on their powerful efforts for the destruction of establishments; they charged their president to inform their panegyrists that they would with pleasure receive any reflections which he, from the stores of his wisdom, might transmit to an assembly whose sentiments coincided with his own. With these testimonies of approbation from British democrats, the convention fancied, as indeed did many of the democrats themselves, that the voice of the British nation was in their favour, and that Joseph Priestley, dissenting minister, Thomas Hardy, dissenting shoemaker, Thomas Paine, cashiered exciseman and deist, Maurice Margarot, knife-grinder and deist, in conveying their own praises of the destruction of rank, property, and monarchy, including the massacres of August and September, echoed the feelings of all free Britons, and that they might soon expect through the British people, the co-operation of the British force. Pleased with attestations, of which they so much over-rated the value, the convention proceeded in a series of measures no less conformable to their own sentiments, than those of their panegyrists. Their operations were directed principally to two objects, plunder and regicide.

This belief influences their political conduct.

THE first head comprehended the farther extension of confiscation, and also the convertibility of the objects thus seized into gold and silver; which they found much more current than the assignats.

The

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The second consisted of resolutions, decrees, charges, and witnesses, which they were preparing, that, in the eyes of their deluded votaries, they might give some colour of legality to the murder of their king. In order to accumulate gold and silver, they saw other countries might be rendered extremely productive; for that purpose it was deemed expedient to combine fraud with robbery. Agents were sent to London, Amsterdam, Madrid, and other opulent cities, with orders to negociate bills on Paris, payable in assignats. Those bills being discounted in foreign countries, the value in specie was remitted to France: when they became due, they were paid according to the course of exchange; but before this could be converted into cash, assassins were hired to patrole the streets, and threaten all those who sold gold and silver[m]; thus the payers were either obliged to take their paper money or a much less sum in coin than that which had been remitted from the discount; and by every operation of this kind the quantity of specie of France was increased. In managing this traffic, the jacobins, proceeding with their usual energy and rapidity, rendered it extremely extensive and productive, before merchants and their bill brokers discovered its hurtful result, and before political causes put an end to the neutrality through which it was effected. The convention, with much ease, amassed immense quantities of gold and silver, both into the public treasury, and into the private coffers of the leaders. The other chief object, the murder of the king, they pursued with the most iniquitous vigour and perseverance.

Schemes of the convention for procuring the property of other countries.

Meanwhile, the Prussian army advanced on the left towards Thionville, and the Austrian army on the right through Luxemburg, in order to join it

Progress of the duke of Brunswick.

[m] The gold and silver were sold by porters in the streets, some of whom sold for their own account, but most of them for monied men, who did not appear. See Playfair's History of Jacobinism.

On

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on the confines of France. The Austrian general reduce Longvy: the armies, after their junction, captured Verdun, and besieged Thionville. The French executive government displayed great vigour and judgment in its exertions and dispositions for resisting and repelling the invasion. The frontier fortresses, which, not without probable reason, they deemed purposely neglected by the royal officers, they strengthened as well as time and circumstances would permit, but trusted their principal defence to more inland posts. Dumourier being appointed general, undertook to defend the passes between Lorrain and Champaign, with a force much inferior to the German host. Roland, minister for the home department, issued a proclamation for carrying off provision and forage, cutting down trees, and forming abbatis to impede the march of the enemy. Leaving the sieges to detachments, the combined troops advanced towards Champaign, and found that the people, far from co-operating, were unanimous and zealous in annoying the invaders. Sickness and want of provisions began to pervade the combined armies: still, however, they persevered in advancing. They found Dumourier posted at St. Menehoud, a strong defile in Champaign. They attacked his front division, but were repulsed. A negociation was opened on the 22d of September, between Dumourier and the king of Prussia, but news arriving of the abolition of monarchy, it was broken off. Dumourier now received daily reinforcements. The duke of Burnswick and the king of Prussia perceiving the strength of the enemy before them, and knowing every thing behind them was hostile, fearing to be hemmed in, proposed to retreat. The Austrian general deprecated this movement, but as his command was only subordinate, he was obliged to comply. On the 30th of September these denouncers of conquest were compelled to measure back their steps;

He enters France, and advances towards Champaign.

Dumourier, the French general, occupies a strong position.

The duke of Brunswick retreats.

steps; and, on their rout, being annoyed by the French army, lost numbers of their men, and a great part of their baggage. Abandoning their conquests, by the 18th of October they completely evacuated France; thus ended the confederate invasion, which excited great hopes, poured out splendid promises and imperious threats, but performed nothing. It was soon found to have materially injuried the cause of the allies: the flight of the enemy, after such boasts operating on the susceptibility of the French character, elevated their spirits, and turned the military energy which defence had excited to offence and invasion. It was speedily resolved to enter Belgium. Dumourier made rapid and effective preparations in provisions, artillery, and troops elated with recent success. In the beginning of November he entered the Austrian Netherlands; on the fifth of the month attacked the Austrian army in its camp at Jemappe, gained a complete and decisive victory. He successively reduced the various cities of Flanders and Brabant; before the middle of the month was master of Brussels; and in less than another month had totally subdued the Austrian Netherlands, except Luxemburg. General Custine having invaded Germany, captured the cities of Worms, Spires, and Mentz; subjugated all the country between the Rhine and the Moselle, except Coblentz; crossing the Rhine, he also reduced Frankfort.

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Elation of the French.

Dumourier enters the Netherlands, defeats his enemy at Jemappe, and reduces the country.

THESE rapid acquisitions operating upon the volatile minds of the French, inspired them immediately with the desire of unbounded conquest. They became as eager to sacrifice the rights and properties of other nations to their ambition and rapacity, as they were to seize the rights and properties of their fellow-subjects. They resolved to preserve or annul treaties, without regard to national faith or to justice, as best suited the boundless advancement of their power. Such being their end, their means were

The French propose to conquer and revolutionise all neighbouring states.

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were at once simple and comprehensive: with their own immense force, to employ in their service the disaffection, caprice, and folly of individuals and bodies in other countries. The susceptibility so often remarked in the French character, appeared in credulity, or the ready admission of assertions and allegations, as well as in sympathic accessibility to sentiments and doctrines. A desire of indefinite change had gone abroad through the world; and prevalent as this passion really was, the French both conceived and believed it to be universal. In Germany and the Netherlands, where it was actually frequent, they supposed it paramount and irresistible, from hatred to arbitrary power and oppression; in England they apprehended it to be equally dominant, as an emanation from the national spirit of liberty. The praises bestowed by eminent statesmen on their efforts to overthrow despotism, they construed into an unqualified approbation of their levelling system. Hearing of the rapid dissemination of the work of Paine, they imputed the reception of these new theories to a desire of applying them to practice. The addresses which they received from obscure clubs, they, on the authority of the addressers, believed to speak the voice of the British people. The three last panegyrics of the reforming societies more specifically expressing a desire of copying the example of France, strengthened their assurance of British sympathy. The last and strongest of these banished all doubts that Britain desired to fraternize with France, in establishing democracy, and levelling ranks and distinctions. So little proportion is there often found in political history between the importance of instruments and effects, that a great scheme of French policy, directly hostile to all established governments, and one of the chief causes which involved Britain in a continental war, is to be traced to the ignorant vanity of the meanest

est mechanics, seeking importance out of their respective spheres. Believing that Thomas Hardy, a shoe-maker, and other worthies of equal political consequence, represented the people of Great Britain, and that the people of other nations concurred to encourage and stimulate subversion of establishment, on the 19th of November 1792, in direct and open contradiction to their former professions, not to interfere in the internal government of other states, the convention passed, by *acclamation*, a decree [n], "That the national convention declare, in the name of the French nation, that they will grant fraternity and assistance to all those people who wish to procure liberty; and that they charge the executive power to send orders to their generals to give assistance to such people as have suffered, or are now suffering, in the cause of liberty." This decree confirmed a suspicion which had been entertained from their preceding conduct, that the fomentation of sedition and insurrection in foreign countries, was a systematic principle [o] of the French republic, immediately produced jealousy and caution in neighbouring nations, and determined most of them to prohibit all intercourse with the French revolutionists. The course of French conquests having led Dumourier to the Scheldt, soon manifested their principles of justice. Their first act, after the reduction of the Austrian Netherlands, was to open the navigation of the Scheldt, in contravention to the most sacred treaties, guaranteed by Britain, France herself, and the neighbouring powers. As Holland was so intimately connected with Britain, their conduct was a peculiar attack upon this country, and showed that they were resolved to include Britain in a

Noted decree of November 19th, encouraging foreign nations to revolutionise.

The French open the Scheldt, contrary to treaties with Britain.

[n] See Proceedings of the National Convention, November 19th, 1792.

[o] Most of our readers will probably recollect the noted saying of Brissot, that they must set fire to the four quarters of the globe. I am assured, by a gentleman who was then at Paris, and very intimate with the Girondists, that this was the general language and intent.

general

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general system of aggressive hostility. With the designs of France, so inimical to the English government, a spirit of disaffection and innovation at home powerfully co-operated.

Effects in Britain from French doctrines and proceedings.

Anti-constitutional ferment during the recess of 1792.

DURING the recess of 1792, the public ferment greatly increased in this country. The efforts of the revolutionary emissaries became more strenuous in London, and in the other great cities of England. Government had been so completely overturned in France, and the possession of power and property had been so entirely attained by the revolutionary banditti, that their courage and audacity were beyond all bounds. The retreat of the Duke of Brunswick; a retreat not displeasing to some even of the moderate friends of freedom, to those, at least, who considered the good of real liberty more than the phantom that had assumed its name in France, greatly emboldened the democratical republicans of England, who admired that phantom.

English republicans confidently hope for a change.

About the capital the approaching downfal of the British constitution became a subject of common talk: king, lords, and commons, church and state, were described as on the eve of dissolution. The garrulous vanity of some of the weak and ignorant members of the democratic societies boasted of the situations they were to attain under the new order which was to be speedily established. From a multiplicity of circumstances it was evident, that a design was formed to overthrow the constitution, and that there was great confidence of its success. That such proceedings required to be checked, controuled, and punished, could not be denied by any who possessed just notions of the nature of man in his social state: government employed such measures as appeared to be the best calculated to correct this growing and threatening mischief. But though the arm of law be sufficiently strong to restrain the open invader of the constitution, it was not altogether able to ferret all the secret arts of its enemies.

Alarm of many friends of the constitution.

enemies. It became necessary, therefore, to aid the efforts of law by employing their own weapons against the adversaries of our establishments. As the approaches were carried on by societies, clubs, and familiar books, suited to the meanest capacities, it became a public duty to establish associations, and prepare literary works, which might oppose these hostile attacks. An association was accordingly instituted in November, by a gentleman of the law named Mr. Reeves, for the avowed purpose of protecting liberty and property against republicans and levellers. The framer's address, stating with great perspicuity and force the multiplied and pernicious efforts of enemies to our laws and constitution, and calling on all loyal and patriotic men to unite in the defence of every thing that could be dear to Britons, made a very deep and rapid impression, and spread a general alarm. Associations for preserving the constitution multiplied in every part of the kingdom, and were joined by far the greater number of respectable Britons. These associations had a most powerful effect in counteracting the seditious societies; they recalled the well-meaning but misguided votaries of innovation to the recollection of the blessings that were ascertained by experience, diffused a spirit of constitutional loyalty through the country, and brought back the stream of popular opinion into the old and useful channel. Mr. Reeves's exhortations to patriotic and loyal union were accompanied with books explaining the hurtful effects of the Gallic changes; and though some of these, in reprobating levelling democracy, may have urged to the contrary extreme, yet the main operation was highly salutary[p]: the whole measure prevented or reco-

Mr. Reeves's association against republicans and levellers,

is very generally joined, and

gives an important turn to public opinion.

[p] For instance, *A Letter from Thomas Bull to his Brother John*, though it employed some of the exploded sentiments and phraseology of tory bigotry, yet taught the common people the mischiefs of innovating speculations; and that their respectability and happiness depended not upon political theories, but on their practical performance of their professional, moral, and religious duties.

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vered great numbers of Britons from Jacobinism, which was then the impending danger; and its certain consequence, if allowed to flourish, the subversion of the British constitution. Before public opinion had received so salutary a bias, the seditious practices had, in various parts, produced such disorders as to render the interference of the executive government necessary. The king availed himself of his legal power to embody the militia, and to convene the parliament before the time to which it had been prorogued, and to call on the representative wisdom of the people for counsel and aid at so momentous a crisis. At this eventful period some of the most distinguished supporters of opposition, deeming the present a season of alarm and danger when all party spirit should subside, when all party contentions should cease, and when all men of all parties should unite to support the constitutional government of the country, considered our external as well as internal enemies to be of a species which never yet had been encountered; and that no weapon could so effectually oppose their diabolical designs as an unanimous and determined spirit of resistance: they therefore supported the present measures of administration.

The king embodies the militia; and, at such a crisis, summons parliament before the appointed time.

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Meeting of parliament.—The king states his reasons for this extraordinary convocation.—The chief subjects of consideration the progress of Jacobinical principles.—The greater number of peers and commoners conceive there is a design to revolutionize Britain.—A small but able band think this alarm unfounded.—Conduct of France comes before parliament.—Peace the interest and wish of Britain, if it could be preserved with security.—Commercial policy of the minister, and unprecedented prosperity of the country.—The British government observe a strict neutrality during the hostilities between France and Germany.—Communication between Lord Grenville and the French ambassador in summer 1792.—On the deposition of the king of the French, our sovereign orders his ambassador to leave Paris.—This order a necessary consequence of our king's determination of neutrality.—Careful avoidance of interference in the internal affairs of France.—Application of the emperor and king of Naples to his Britannic majesty to refuse shelter to murderers.—Strict adherence to neutrality by Britain.—Aggressions on the part of France.—Chauvelin opens an explanatory negotiation.—Marat, the French secretary, comes to London to confer with Mr. Pitt.—Maret justifies, on revolutionary principles, the opening of the Scheldt, though contrary to the established law of nations.—Mr. Chauvelin supports the same doctrine in his correspondence with Lord Grenville—professes the decree of November 19th not intended against Britain.—Reply of the British minister.—He declares Britain will not suffer France to annul at pleasure the established law of nations.—Britain requires France to forego her projects of invading and revolutionizing other countries.—Alien bill—is passed into a law.—Augmentation of the army and navy.—Proceedings at Paris.—Gironde party—their literary ability, boundless ambition, and wild projects.—The Mountain bloodthirsty and ferocious.—Robespierre, Danton, and Marat.—The Girondists desire to spare the king's life.—The Moun-

tain and the mob desire regicide.—Pusillanimity of Brissot and the other Girondists.—A decree is passed for bringing the king to trial.—Attempts to break the spirit of Louis—trial—not the smallest proof of guilt.—Complicated iniquity of the process in principle, substance, and mode.—Self-possession and magnanimity of the persecuted monarch.—Sentence.—Last interview of Louis with his family.—Execution—an awful monument of the doctrines and sentiments that governed France.—Chauvelin demands from the British minister the recognition of the French republic—and the admission of its ambassador.—The British government refuses a recognition which would be an interference in the internal affairs of France.—Chauvelin remonstrates against the alien bill and the preparations of Britain—on the massacre of Louis ordered to leave the country.—France declares war against Britain and Holland.—Review of the conduct of both parties.—Opinions of Messrs. Burke, Fox, and Pitt respectively, on the French revolution—the justice and policy of a war.—Messrs. Burke and Pitt support the war on different grounds.—Mr. Pitt proposes the security of Britain—Mr. Burke the restoration of monarchy in France.—Violent party censures.—Impartial history finds in the conduct of neither just grounds for their reciprocal reproach.—Public opinion favourable to war with France.—In declaring war against France, our king spoke the voice of a great majority of his people.

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Meeting of parliament. The king states his reasons for this extraordinary convocation.

ON the 13th of December parliament was assembled; and the king stated his various reasons for his present measures. Notwithstanding the strict neutrality which he had uniformly observed in the war now raging on the continent, he could not, without concern, observe the strong indications of an intention in the French to excite disturbances in other countries; to pursue views of conquest and aggrandizement inconsistent with the balance of Europe; to disregard the rights of neutral powers; and to adopt towards his allies, the States General, measures neither conformable to the public law, nor to the positive articles of existing treaties. He had, therefore, found it necessary to make some augmentation of his army and navy:

these exertions were demanded by the present state of affairs, to maintain internal tranquillity, and render a temperate and firm conduct effectual for preserving the blessings of peace.

Chief subjects of deliberation the progress of Jacobinical principles and French power.

NEVER did more momentous objects engage the attention of a British legislature than in the present session of parliament. Its many and complicated subjects of deliberation, however, chiefly resulted from two subjects which were interwoven together, the operation of Jacobinical principles, and the advances of French power. Ministers, supported not only by those members who for many years approved of their measures, but by most of the principal nobility of the old whig interest, Mr. Burke, the veteran champion of that party, and many other gentlemen of the house of commons, also, many members of the north part of the coalition, especially lord Loughborough, now Chancellor, declared their conviction that a design existed to revolutionize this country; and that, notwithstanding the precautions which were already employed, still constant vigilance, prudence, firmness, and energy, was necessary to prevent its success. It had not hitherto, they admitted, produced such overt acts as to afford grounds for judicial process; but had discovered, and even manifested, such objects and tendencies as demanded the counteraction of deliberative wisdom. There were intentions and schemes openly avowed, with many more reasonably suspected, for effecting the downfal of the existing establishments; although no specific treasonable plot had been actually brought to light, the evidence for the existence of such projects consisted of conversations, writings, specific proceedings, and general conduct. To repress such views and attempts, preventive and prospective measures were proposed, and not retrospective or penal.

The greater number of peers and commoners conceive there is a design to revolutionize Britain.

A small but able band

A SMALL but very able band, headed by Mr. Fox,

 ridiculed

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think this alarm unfounded.

ridiculed and reprobated this apprehension; they said it was a mere chimera, like the Popish plot of Titus Oates; that it sprang from the eloquent misrepresentations of Mr. Burke's invectives against the French revolution, and was supported by ministers to promote an alarm; divide the whigs; oppose the spirit of liberty and the reform of parliament, and facilitate hostility with France. These were the respective positions of the bodies which now differed in Parliament on the subject of internal danger. Mr. Fox and his adherents called for specific instances of conspiracy; and alleged, that since none were produced, the pretended schemes and projects did not exist; that every general imputation must be an aggregate of particular facts, or must be false; that the deduction of probable practice from speculative theories was inconsistent with sound reason and experience, and totally unworthy of a legislature. Must parliament interfere whenever a hot-brained enthusiast writes or speaks nonsense? For the ostensible purposes of ministry, their arguments were futile; but for their real purposes their assertions and actions were well adapted. At the commencement of the session Mr. Pitt was absent, his seat being vacated by his acceptancy of the Cinque Ports. The chief impugner of these arguments of Mr. Fox and his friends was Mr. Burke, who, shewing the connection between opinion and conduct, insisted that the strongest preventive policy was necessary to the salvation of Britain.

Conduct of France comes before parliament.

Peace the interest and wish of Britain, if it could be preserved with security.

MEANWHILE the conduct of France towards this country, with the part which Britain should act in the present emergency, was a subject of anxious concern to the parliament and nation. To a commercial country deriving its prosperity from its industry and arts, cherished by peace, war was an evil to be incurred from no motive but necessity. The extension of commerce, manufactures, and every

every other source of private wealth and public revenue, though very far from exclusively occupying the official talents of Mr. Pitt, had hitherto been the most constantly prominent objects of his administration. He had promoted trade by the wisest and most efficacious means, removal of restraint, and reciprocation of profit. His exertions had been eminently successful where legislative or ministerial effort was necessary, and when no political interference was wanted, the national capital, enterprize, and skill, nourished by freedom, and secured by peace, had done the rest. The prosperity of the country was beyond the precedent of any former time, and was evidently more abundant from the advantages of neutrality in the midst of surrounding war. The British government was fully aware of the blessings of peace, and the British sovereign had uniformly adhered to the strictest neutrality, and also to a rigid forbearance from any interference in the internal affairs of France. As soon as the king of France had announced to Britain the commencement of a war between the German powers and his dominions, the court of London issued a proclamation, enjoining his majesty's subjects to receive no commission from any enemy of the French king; and in no way to act hostilely to him or his people, under the severest penalties.[a] His majesty's subjects observed these injunctions, and no complaint of aggression was alleged either by the French king or nation. Chauvelin, the French ambassador, applied to the British secretary on the 24th of May, stating, that the proclamation published a few days before against seditious writings, contained expressions which might, contrary to the intentions of the British ministry, encourage an idea that France was considered as inimical to the internal tranquil-

Commercial policy of the minister, and unprecedented prosperity of the country.

The British government observed a strict neutrality during the hostilities between France and Germany.

Communications between lord Grenville and the French ambassador in summer, 1792.

[a] See Debrett's State Papers, 25th May, 1792.

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lity of England, and requested his application might be communicated to parliament. Lord Grenville's reply represented that Mr. Chauvelin had deviated (he was convinced unintentionally) from the rules of this kingdom, in applying to the British minister to communicate to parliament any subject of diplomatic discussion; but assured the French minister of the cordiality of the British sovereign. Chauvelin acknowledged his mistake, and expressed his satisfaction at the assurances of amity which the British minister's answers had conveyed.[a] On the 18th of June Mr. Chauvelin delivered a note, stating that by the proceedings of the German potentates, the balance of Europe, the independence of the different powers, the general peace, every consideration which at all times has fixed the attention of the English government, was at once exposed and threatened; and inviting his Britannic majesty, for the general security, to interfere with his mediation. His majesty, adhering rigidly to the neutrality, replied, that consistently with his impartial determination, he could not propose an intervention when not solicited by both parties.[b] On the 11th of July 1792, a small fleet sailed from Portsmouth, under the command of admiral lord Hood, to perform naval evolutions in the channel. The whole squadron consisted only of five ships of the line, besides frigates and sloops: it had but a fortnight's provision on board, and had manifestly no other destination than a sea review. The matter, however, was so magnified in France, and was represented in such a false light, that on the 26th of July, an immediate armament of thirty ships of the line was proposed in the national assembly, and the marine committee was ordered to draw up a report on the subject, and present it within a few

[b] See the series of correspondence between lord Grenville and Mr. Chauvelin, in Debrett's State Papers, from May 24, to July 8th, 1792.

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days.[c] But Mr. Chauvelin having enquired into the object and circumstances of this squadron, was satisfied that its purpose was not hostile; and the French government and nation were convinced that Britain had no design of taking any part with their enemies.[d]

On the deposition the king of the French, our sovereign orders his ambassador to leave Paris.

His Britannic majesty being informed of the suspension of the king's executive power by the decree of the 10th of August, directed his secretary of state[e], Mr. Dundas to write to lord Gower, the British ambassador at Paris, that the exercise of the executive power having been withdrawn from his Christian Majesty, the credentials of the ambassador were no longer valid, and that he should return to England. This order his majesty deemed a necessary consequence from his determination of neutrality[f]; because the continuance of his representative at Paris, treating as the sovereign power that party which had overturned the constitution recently established, would have been an interference in the internal affairs of France, by an acknowledgment of the republican party, in preference to the loyalists and constitutionalists.

This order a necessary consequence of our determination of neuterality.

Careful avoidance of interference in the internal affairs of France.

Our king, conformably to the same cautious and discriminating policy, which would not pledge to the one side his virtual support, repeated his declarations, that he would not support the other, or in any way interfere in the internal arrangements of France.[g] Lord Gower having communicated his royal master's orders, and the reasons wherein they were founded, to Mr. Le Brun, minister for foreign affairs, he expressed the regret of the executive council that the ambassador was to be withdrawn,

[c] See the Moniteur, 28th July, 1792.

[d] See Moniteurs of July 1792, and Marsh's History of the Politics of Great Britain and France, chapter 8.

[e] Lord Grenville happening to be out of town when this intelligence arrived, that part of his official business was performed by his colleague.

[f] The reader will see the arguments on this subject minutely and accurately detailed in Marsh's history of the Politics of Great Britain and France.

[g] See Debrett's State Papers, 17th August, 1792.

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but its satisfaction at his majesty's continued assurance of neutrality, and determination not to interfere in the internal affairs of France.[h] In the month of September, the emperor and king of Naples stated to his Britannic majesty their apprehensions, that the atrocities of Paris would extend to the lives of the royal family, and expressed their hopes, that should such a nefarious crime be committed, his majesty would grant no asylum to the perpetrators.[i] With a request so conformable to justice, humanity, a sense of moral obligation, and an abhorrence of enormous wickedness, the king complied, and induced his allies the States General to form the same resolution. Here there was certainly no deviation from neutrality, no interference in the constitution of the French polity, unless a declared purpose to refuse shelter to a party that shall commit an atrocious murder, be an interference in that party's private concerns. When the theatre of advancing conquest approached so near the United Netherlands, the king declared his resolution to adhere to their mutual alliance, and at the same time expressed his conviction that the belligerent parties would not violate the neutrality of the States General. From the time of the deposition of the king, Chauvelin could not properly be considered as ambassador from the monarch of France. Nevertheless the British government not only permitted him to reside in London, but even negotiated with him when he was agent for the executive council; and lord Grenville assured him "that outward forms would be no hindrance to his Britannic majesty, whenever the question related to explanations, which might be satisfactory and advantageous to both parties;" and Mr. Pitt declared to the same gentleman, that it was his desire to avoid a war,

Application of the emperor and king of Naples to his Britannic majesty to refuse shelter to murderers.

Strict adherence to neutrality by Britain.

[h] Brissot and his party deemed the recal of the ambassador a hostile step; but admitted there had been none before. See Marsh, chap. ix.

[i] Debrett's State Papers, September 20th.

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and to receive a proof of the same sentiments from the French ministry.[k] MR. PITT AND HIS COADJUTORS WERE UNIFORMLY CONSISTENT IN MAINTAINING ONE PRINCIPLE, THAT THE INTERNAL CHANGES OF FRANCE DID NOT PRECLUDE AMITY WITH ENGLAND; and therein totally differed from Mr. Burke and his followers. No communications material to the question of aggression passed between Mr. Chauvelin and the British minister, until the decree of the 19th of November, the invasion of the rights of our allies, and the rapid advances of French conquest, aroused and alarmed Britain. There had hitherto been strict neutrality, as we have seen, on the part of England, while there had been aggression on the part of France; for that aggression satisfaction was due, and the French professed to wish a pacific adjustment. Chauvelin was instructed to open an explanatory negotiation, conformable to those professions. Ostensibly to promote this purpose, Mr. Maret now foreign minister of France, came himself to England, to confer with Mr. Pitt. In the uniform spirit of neutrality which Britain observed, his majesty avoided discussing the diplomatic capacity of the ministers who were sent by the executive council of France; because an admission of their official character would import the admission of the executorial competency of their employers; would have been a declaration in favour of a party, and consequently an interference in the internal arrangements of France. Mr. Pitt therefore did not meet Mr. Maret as the minister of England the minister of France; however, they did meet, and their conversation, as detailed from Mr. Maret's [l] communication,

Aggression on the part of France.

Chauvelin opens an explanatory negotiation.

Maret, the French secretary comes to London, to confer with Mr. Pitt.

[k] These declarations of our two ministers are acknowledged by Brissot, in his report to the convention of the 12th of January 1793; and in the official revolutionary journal, the Moniteur of 15th January, 1793.

[l] By Mr. Miles, in a work entitled Authentic Correspondence. Mr. Miles was the intimate and confidential friend of Mr. Maret.

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shewed on the one hand, that MR. PITT EARNESTLY DESIRED TO PRESERVE PEACE WITH FRANCE; and on the other, that the French agent endeavoured to explain the obnoxious decree as not intended to apply to Britain. On the subject of the Scheldt, Maret stated that the order of the council, and the decree of the national convention concerning that navigation, founded on the most sacred principles of Gallic liberty, were irrevocable, and thus admitted that the internal change in France was by its votaries considered as authorising them to violate the rights of foreign and independent nations; and that they were resolved to make no satisfaction for an injury inflicted, in conformity to this [m] principle. The same questions were agitated with much greater particularity of detail, and reciprocation of argument, between Monsieur Chauvelin and Lord Grenville, in the latter end of November, and during the month of December. Chauvelin maintained the right of the French to open the navigation of the Scheldt: he however declared, by order of the executive council, that if at the end of the war the Belgians were unfettered, and, in full possession of their liberty, relinquished this navigation, the French would decline all opposition. This answer evinced a firm and unalterable resolution of adhering not only to the infraction of the treaty of Utrecht, but also of dismembering the Netherlands from the Austrian dominions, and making them dependent on France; he obstinately contended that the decree of the 19th of November could have no reference to Great Britain, and declared that if Holland continued to observe neutrality, France would not invade her dominions. These professions the British minister would not believe, because they were totally contradicted by

Maret justifies on revolutionary principles the opening of the Scheldt, though contrary to the established law of nations.

Chauvelin supports the same doctrine in his correspondence with Lord Grenville,

and professes the decree of 19th Nov. not intended against Britain.

[m] See Maret's letter to his colleague. Debrett's State Papers, 2d December, 1792.

actual

actual conduct. Concerning the decree of the convention, the application of these principles to the British king's dominions was unequivocally shewn, by the public reception given to the promoters of sedition in this country, and by the speeches made to them precisely at the time of this decree, and since on several different occasions. At the very time France declared she would not invade Holland, she had already attacked that nation by opening the Scheldt. France, (said the British minister,) can have no right to annul the stipulations relative to the Scheldt, unless she have also the right to set aside equally all the other treaties, between all the powers of Europe, and all the other rights of England, or of her allies. She can even have no pretence to interfere in the question of opening the Scheldt, unless she were the sovereign of the Low Countries, or had the right to dictate laws to all Europe. England will never consent that France shall arrogate the power of annulling at her pleasure, and under the pretence of a pretended natural right, of which she makes herself the only judge, the political system of Europe, established by solemn treaties, and guaranteed by the consent of all the powers. This government, adhering to the maxims which it has followed for more than a century, will also never see with indifference that France shall make herself, either directly or indirectly, sovereign of the Low Countries, or general arbitress of the rights and liberties of Europe. If France is really desirous of maintaining friendship and peace with England, she must shew herself disposed to renounce her views of aggression and aggrandizement, and to confine herself within her own territory, without insulting other governments, disturbing their tranquillity, and violating their rights[n]; but the French

Reply of the British minister.

He declares Britain will not suffer France to annul at pleasure the established law of nations.

Britain requires France to forego her projects of invading and revolutionizing other countries.

[n] See correspondence between Lord Grenville and Mr. Chauvelin, in December 1792. State papers for that period.

government

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government positively refused to satisfy Britain for the violation of treaties.*

1792. In the consideration of peace or war with the French republic, the proceedings of the French rulers, the negotiation between their agents and British ministers, and the conduct of our executive and legislative government, are so much interwoven, that it is frequently necessary to change the scene to review their process of action and re-action, and exhibit cause and effect. Before we follow this negotiation to its close, it is necessary to present to our readers, both internal legislative proceedings, and foreign acts, by which the negotiation was affected. The great objects of alarm, both to the British government, and to the principal part of the British nation, were the rapid advances of French principles, and the rapid progress of French power. The number of aliens at this time in Britain, far surpassed the usual influx. Of these, many so conducted themselves as to justify a suspicion of their evil intentions towards this country. Agreeably to the system of preventive policy already recorded, the attorney-general proposed to parliament to provide for the public tranquillity by subjecting the resort, and residence of aliens to certain regulations. All foreigners arriving in the kingdom were, by the plan of ministers, to explain their reasons for coming into this country, to give up all arms except those commonly used for defence or dress. In their several removals through the country, they were to use passports, by which their actual residence, or occasional movements might be manifest, and their conduct easily observed. Those who received eleemosynary support, were to be distributed in districts, where they would be more liable to the vigilance of the civil power. Particular attention was to be paid to foreigners who had visited this

Alien bill.

* See Chauvelin's note to Lord Grenville, Dec. 27th.

kingdom

kingdom within the present year, who should hereafter come without obvious reasons, and be thus more obnoxious to prudent suspicion. Such were the objects and chief provisions of the law known by the name of the *alien bill*. Those members of both houses who had denied the existence of the dangerous doctrines, consistently with their opinions, opposed a measure, which upon their hypothesis was certainly not necessary. Admitting, however, that there was external danger from abroad, they unanimously agreed to ministerial motions for the augmentation of the army and navy.

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is passed into a law.

Augmentation of the army and navy.

While the British legislature was making these dispositions against internal and foreign danger, an event took place in France, the flagrant injustice and ferocious cruelty of which most fatally manifested the pitch of infuriate wickedness at which the Jacobins were arrived. The republicans now consisted of two parties, the Girondists and the Mountain. The former contained the principal part of the literary class, ingenious, and eloquent enemies of monarchy; the latter, the most daring and blood-thirsty directors of the murderous mobs, the votaries of anarchy. Though men of genius, the leaders of the Gironde were much more brilliant than solid.[p] Formed to the metaphysical theories long so prevalent in France, they carried their visionary abstractions to practical life. To subtle paradox and ingenious hypothesis, which are commonly the effusions of literary retirement, many of them joined profligate corruption and rapacity, that would grasp all the wealth and power which stimulate injustice in the active world, with an excessive vanity, which represented all the objects of their cupidity as within the reach of their invention and

Proceedings at Paris.

Gironde party.

[p] The chief philosophical scholar among them was Condorcet. Brissot was animated, enthusiastic, and operative, but by no means profound.

enterprize.

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enterprize. This wildness of speculative sciolism, this depravity of principle and pursuit, and this overweening self-estimation dictated their internal and external politics; impelled them to seek a republic not suitable to the human character; in which, levelling others, they might themselves enjoy boundless riches and unlimited sway; and to fancy that their talents and address could employ both the weakness and strength of various parties, in their own and other countries, as instruments for the execution of their designs. To extend the circle of their proposed dominion, and also that pre-eminence which Frenchmen have always sought, they formed their boundless schemes of national aggrandizement [q]; of embroiling mankind in war; subjugating all countries by French principles and French power, and thus subjecting the whole to themselves; new as these men were in some part of the composition of their characters, yet in others as old as vanity, avarice, and profligacy, they transcended every bound of morality or religion. Possessing great energy, they in a considerable degree attained, and for a short time preserved the objects of their desire; but wanting profound wisdom, and over-rating their own talents of managing tools, they ultimately fell by the instruments of their exaltation. As the great operators in the several changes of the revolution were the Parisian rabble, the demagogues, who could most readily and effectually direct the mob, possessed a formidable power either instrumental or supreme according to the ability and skill of its possessors. The members of the legislature, most ferociously violent against the king, were the Mountain. These, less literary in their acquirements, less metaphysical in their harangues, exhibited in their manners a coarseness which the others, educated as gentlemen, had not

1792. Their literary ability, boundless ambition, and wild projects.

The Mountain bloodthirsty and ferocious.

[q] See Brissot's works passim; also the writings of other Girondists.

been

been able completely to attain, and were much more popular among the governing sansculottes. The head of this party was Robespierre, a man much inferior to the Girondists in cultivated understanding, polished eloquence, and those talents which would have had weight with an ingenious and refined audience; but by the uncouth plainness of his speeches, and the energy of his invectives, he was well fitted to govern a mob at any time; and by his stern and sanguinary disposition peculiarly suited to the Parisian mob, panting for regicide. Next in power was Danton, equally blood-thirsty and ambitious, less strong and direct in his means, but more dexterous. Subordinate to these was Marat; a half-lettered editor of a newspaper, hideous in appearance, loathsome by disease[r], and squalid in attire; he was passionately desirous of reducing all eminence and distinction to the same low level with himself; and long the hireling of Orleans, he imbibed against the king that rancorous gall which he had been paid for disseminating through the populace. Bloody in his disposition, ardent in his cruel exhortations; he was the delight of the murderous mob, because in so many points coinciding with themselves. By these leaders chiefly, assisted by many others of the Mountain members, the Parisian rabble was directed. The Gironde party saw the character of these demagogues, but in their eager efforts to subdue the constitutionalists, and overthrow kingly power, had co-operated with the Mountain; intending, and for a considerable time appearing, to use them as tools. The insurrection of the 10th of August was the work of the Girondists for the subversion of monarchy: Danton was a most powerful auxiliary in the massacres of that bloody day. So effectually instrumental to the execution of the Girondist designs, the mob, and the leaders of the

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1792. Robespierre, Danton, and Marat.

[r] See Adolphus's Memoirs. Life of Marat.

Mountain,

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Mountain, more sensibly felt their own resistless power. The Gironde party were totally unrestrained by conscience from seeking their ends through means however wicked; yet they do not appear to have had a desire of shedding blood merely for pleasure. Blood they would not spare where they conceived it to answer their purpose; the butchery of their fellow-creatures, however, they did not seek as a *pastime*. Not so the sansculottes, who manifestly sought massacre for its own sake.[*] Before the beginning of September the power of the Mountain was very greatly increased. Marat and his associates, under Danton and Robespierre, were the ringleaders in the September carnage. Brissot had formed the plan of a national convention, and a republic: the leaders of the Mountain were contriving that the republic, which they had been instrumental in creating should be directed by themselves, and that the national convention should contain a majority of their creatures. When the assembly which he had projected met, Brissot found that the Mountain was becoming very strong. The executive council, however, still consisted of Girondists, and, the army being commanded by officers of that party, they remained formidable. The Gironde party, desirous of establishing democracy, appeared to have had no intention of attacking the life of their sovereign, unless they conceived it to interfere with the preservation of the republic and their own power. From the German retreat, and the subsequent success of the French arms, they entertained no apprehensions of the restoration of monarchy, and wished to save the king's life: the opposite party, not merely murderers from policy, but sanguinary from the infuriate disposition of the multitude, desired the blood of Louis. The jacobin

The Girondists wish to spare the life of the king.

The Mountain and the mob desire his massacre.

[*] What but the mere delight in human carnage could have prompted the greater part of the September massacres? See details in Playfair's Jacobinism.

clubs,

clubs, now leagued with the Mountain, promoted the savage barbarity. Their leaders, especially Robespierre, had formed views of the most unbounded ambition, and conceived that, by involving the people in the guilt of regicide; they would bind them entirely to their system, and overpower their adversaries the Gironde and all other parties. The Girondists, superior as they were in genius and literature to the Mountain, were less daring and intrepid; and besides, had more to dread, as their adversaries were supported by the governing "mob. There were, however, still great numbers throughout the provinces, and even in Paris itself, who ardently desired to spare the blood of their king. By firmness and magnanimity, the Girondists, possessing the executorial functions, might have rallied round the metropolis a sufficient force for saving innocent blood; but they did not display the courage of resolute determination, without which lawless ambition will not retain newly usurped power. The proceedings were pusillanimous half measures, more contemptible in their inefficacy than the diabolical conduct of their adversaries; and though less detestable in their operation, equally noxious in the result. The Mountain persuaded the populace that Louis had betrayed his country, and conspired against France with its enemies: on these grounds they instigated the mob to demand his trial.[x] After various preliminary discussions, the Girondists being afraid to express their sentiments, a decree was passed for bringing to trial a personage whose life, by every principles of expediency and policy, ought to have been sacred under any well-regulated constitution; and whose person was inviolable according to the polity existing in France at the time when the acts charged were alleged to have been committed. To prevent the public mind

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Pusillanimity of Brissot and the other Girondists.

A decree is passed for bringing the king to trial.

[u] Segur, vol. iii. page 6. [x] Ibid. page 7.

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from hearing innocence calling for justice, they suffered not the king to know that his life was sought. From the fidelity of a zealous domestic[y] Louis of France first learned that a perjured banditti prepared publicly to destroy their monarch's life, which every federate Frenchman had sworn to protect.

Attempts to break the spirit of Louis.

To break down the soul of their sovereign by accumulated misery, they debarred him from the sight and converse of his wife and children. They hoped that the strength of his benevolent affections, thus deprived of their dearest objects, would crush the faculties of his mind, and would disable him from vindicating his innocence, and exposing the enormity of their blood-thirsty guilt; but their purpose was frustrated. The dreadful situation in which their wickedness had placed him, roused the energies of a mind which manifested itself not unworthy of the descendant of Henry.

Trial.

With every circumstance of degradation that the upstart insolence of unmerited power could bestow, he was brought to the bar, and his charges were read. They consisted of two general heads; first, of crimes committed before his acceptance of the constitution; secondly, of crimes committed after his acceptance of the constitution. The evidence was composed of interrogatories put to the accused himself, and of documents charged to have been written with his privity and concurrence. The charges before his acceptance of the constitution he successively answered, by declaring what every hearer well knew, that the power then vested in him authorized the several acts, and consequently could now be no subject of question: the accusations for conduct subsequent to the acceptance he either shewed to be agreeable to his constitutional powers, or denied to be such as were represented. In every particular case he protested he had acted according to the best of

[y] See Clery.

his

his judgment for the good of his subjects. The allegation of conspiracy with the enemies of his country he firmly denied. The written evidence on which he was accused contained neither proof nor grounds for probable presumption that he was culpable, much less guilty: the assertions rested upon no evidence.[z] When the charge for the prosecution was finished, the king applied for permission to be allowed counsel. Various emigrants[a], informed of the charges, proffered exculpatory testimony: Louis's judges would hear no evidence but on one side: the accusation was totally unsupported by proof. His defence was conducted, first by himself, with great magnanimity and ability, and afterwards by his counsel. It was glaringly manifest, that his accusers had totally failed in making out their case; that there was not a shadow of foundation to justify an arraignment, much less evidence to authorise a penal sentence, even against the meanest subject. Before judgment was passed, it was proposed to appeal to the people. The national convention, it was said, was not a tribunal of judges, but an assembly of lawgivers; and in assuming a judicial power they were usurpers. The people, their constituents, had not delegated to the national convention the power of trying causes. This objection, though unanswerably valid, had no weight with men determined to commit murder; for the appeal there were two hundred and eighty-three, against it four hundred and twenty-four. It being resolved by such a majority that the king should suffer punishment, it was strenuously contended by one party that he should be confined, by the other that he should be put to death. In a meeting of seven hundred the bloody verdict was

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Not the slightest proof of guilt.

Condemnation and sentence.

[z] For the proof of this assertion we refer to the reports of the trial.

[a] Lally Tollendal, Bertrand, Narbon, Cazales, and Bouillé, offered, at the risk of their lives, to go to Paris, and bear testimony to the falsity of the principal charges against the king, wherein they respectively were said to have been agents. Otridge's Annual Register, 1793.

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passed by a majority of five! The iniquitous sentence being delivered after midnight, on the 20th of January, it was that day, at two o'clock, announced to the king, that the following day he was to be executed. With unmoved countenance hearing the decree read, he requested permission to see his family. The hardened hearts of his murderers did not refuse him this last boon.[b] He himself first conveyed to his queen, sister, and children, the agonizing intelligence. During the dismal interview, retaining his firmness, he inculcated on his son the transient nature of sublunary grandeur; called to his mind what his father had been, and then was; bid him trust for happiness to that virtue and religion which no human efforts could efface. Late in the evening his family left him, trusting[c] to see him the next morning once more. Prepared by conscious innocence, uprightness, and piety, for meeting death, neither guilt nor fear disturbed his rest. He slept soundly[d] till five o'clock, the hour at which he ordered his faithful valet to awaken him for the last time.[e] His family he now resolved to forbear again pressing to his arms. The bitterness of death the tranquil resignation of the Christian regarded with complacency; the bitterness of parting grief the brother, father, and husband could not endure. He sought from religion, in his last hours, that consolation which, in the zenith of power, splendor, and magnificence, as well as in humiliation and captivity, she had never failed to afford. The attendance of a clergyman, a favour refused him ever since his imprisonment in the Temple by his atheistical oppressors, was, at his earnest entreaty, granted him on the day of his massacre. Being now assisted in the external rites, as well as encouraged in the internal sentiments of devotion, and having opened his soul

Self-possession and magnanimity of the persecuted monarch.

view of Louis with his family.

[b] Clery's Journal, 235. [c] Ibid. 239. [d] Ibid. 242. [e] Ibid.

to

to a priest whose sanctity he revered, he, for a short interval, returned to the concerns of this world; delivered to his faithful servant his last charges and commissions [f] to be conveyed to his family and friends. The messengers of murder arrived; and he was conducted from the Temple. When he was ascending the scaffold his executioners seized his hands in order to tie them behind his back: as he was not prepared for this last insult, he appeared disposed to repel it, and his countenance already beamed with indignation. Mr. Edgeworth, his clerical attendant, sensible that resistance would be vain, and might expose the royal sufferer to outrages more violent, entreated his sovereign to submit. [g] He presented his hands to the ministers of blood: they tied them with so much force as to call forth another remonstrance. He now mounted the scaffold amidst the noise of drums: bound and disfigured as he was, he advanced with a firm step, and requesting the drums to cease, was obeyed. He then, with a steady voice and in a distinct tone, addressed the people to the following purport:—"Frenchmen, I die innocent of all the crimes which have been imputed to me; and I forgive my enemies. I implore God, from the bottom of my heart, to pardon them, and not take vengeance on the French nation for the blood about to be shed." As he was proceeding, the inhuman Santerre [h], who presided at the execution, ordered the drums to beat, and the executioners to perform

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[f] At seven o'clock (says Clery), the king coming out of his closet, called to me, and taking me within the recess of the window, said, "You will give this seal to my son, this ring to the queen, and assure her that it is with pain I part with it: this little packet contains the hair of all my family; you will give her that too. Tell the queen, my dear children, and my sister, that although I promised to see them this morning, I have resolved to spare them the pangs of so cruel a separation: Tell them how much it costs me to go without receiving their embraces once more!" Clery, 249.

[g] The words of the priest were, "Sire, this added humiliation is another circumstance in which your majesty's sufferings resemble those of that Saviour who will soon be your recompence."

[h] Annual Register, 1793.

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their office. The king's voice was drowned in the noise of drums, and the clamours of the soldiery. As the fatal guillotine descended on his head, the confessor exclaimed, "Son of St. Louis, ascend into heaven!" The bleeding head was exhibited to the populace, some of whom shouted, *Vive la republique!* but the majority appeared to be struck dumb with horror, while the affection of many led them to bathe their handkerchiefs in his blood. That every barbarous insult might be offered to the remains of the murdered prince, the body was conveyed in a cart to the church-yard of St. Madelaine, and thrown into a grave, which was instantly filled with quick-lime, and a guard placed over it till the corpse was consumed.

THE execution of Louis XVI. violated every principle of justice, and every rule of law, which affords security to men bound together in society. By the established constitution, and which subsisted during all the time that he had any power to act, his person was inviolable.[i] By the law of the land he was amenable to no criminal court: the most tyrannical of all decrees only, a law passed after the alleged guilt, could subject him to penal enquiry, whatever might have been his crime. But if his person had not been by law inviolable, the assembly which presumed to try him was not a competent court. The national convention, even though admitted to be the delegates of the people fairly chosen, were not delegates beyond the extent of their commissions: they were chosen by the people as their legislative representatives only. In exercising a judicial power, they were not a lawful tribunal, but a banditti of usurpers.[k] If the national convention had been a competent court,

[i] Chap. xlvii.

[k] This argument was very forcibly and eloquently employed by the constitutionalists and Girondists against the murderous Mountain. See speeches of the convention passim.

the

the charges adduced were principally irrelevant; some of the acts alleged referred to a period in which the constitution had been different, and in which Louis had simply exercised the powers which were then vested in the king: his former conduct they had sanctioned by conferring on him the supreme executive authority by the new constitution. Most of the accusations against him subsequent to his acceptance were constitutional exertions of his prerogative. The charges of corresponding with emigrants and foreign powers for the purpose of overturning the liberties of France, were supported by no authentic evidence. Thus, a personage criminally responsible to no French tribunal, was tried by a set of men that were not a legal court, for charges not criminal by the law of the land, if proved; or charges which, if criminal, were not proved. Condemned and executed in those circumstances, he presented to France an awful monument of the ferocious disposition by which it was now governed. The massacre of Louis demonstrated that liberty, law, and justice, were vanished; and exhibited the prevalence of a system which terror only could maintain.

Complicated iniquity of the process in principle, substance, and mode.

An awful monument of the doctrines and sentiments that governed France.

While the French government was preparing this dreadful catastrophe, it instructed its agent at London to demand the virtual recognition of its establishment and authority, in the acceptance of an accredited ambassador. His Britannic majesty, considering the present rulers as only one party, and from the rapid vicissitudes of sway, a temporary and short-lived party, in conformity to his principles of neutrality, would not receive an ambassador, because such admission would have acknowledged as the rulers of France a particular junto; and violated his resolution and promise not to interfere in the internal affairs of France. But though he would not recognize the paramount faction of the day, as the firmly established and

Chauvelin demands from Britain the recognition of the French republic, and the admission of its ambassador. The British government refuses.

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permanent rulers of France, yet while these powers did exist, and menaced England with hostility, he did not forbear to repeat his statements of the injuries which he had received, and the satisfaction he demanded; and since that continued to be refused, to prepare the means of enforcing redress. Chauvelin, by the instructions of the executive council, still persisted to refuse satisfaction for their aggressions, demanding the recognition of the republic, and the acceptance of an ambassador. He farther remonstrated against the alien bill, and the naval and military preparations, imputed hostile intentions to England, and notified that if the preparations continued, France would prepare for war. In conformity to the principles and objects of the decree of the 19th of November, he intimated an intention to appeal to the people of England against the government. His Britannic majesty, persevering in his former conduct, declared he would continue his preparations until France should relinquish her ambitious aggression.[1] On the 24th of January 1793, intelligence arrived in London of the melancholy catastrophe of Louis XVI. His majesty immediately directed a notification to be sent to Mr. Chauvelin, that the character with which he had been invested at the British court, and of which the functions had been so long suspended, being now entirely terminated by the fatal death of his most Christian majesty, he had no longer any public character here. The king, after such an event, could permit his residence here no longer: within eight days he must quit the kingdom, but every attention should be paid him that was due to the character of the ambassador of his most Christian majesty, which he had exercised at this court. A negociation was still

Chauvelin remonstrates against the alien bill.

On the massacre of the king he is ordered to leave Britain.

[1] See series of correspondence between Mr. Chauvelin and Lord Grenville: Debrett's State Papers of 27th December 1792, to 27th January 1793, both inclusive.

still open on the frontiers of Holland; between lord Aukland and general Dumouriez, but the French persisted in refusing to relinquish their invasion of our allies, and in demanding the recognition of the republic; which requisitions being totally inadmissible, matters were not accommodated. The French rulers, finding Britain inflexibly determined on adherence to the rights of independent nations, by a decree of the convention, declared war against Great Britain with acclamations, and soon after against Holland, which their forces were ready to invade. Britain and Holland, in their own defence, returned a declaration of hostilities; and thus commenced the war between Great Britain and the French republic.

France declares war against Britain and Holland.

THE hostile advances of France, and the refused satisfaction for an aggression totally inconsistent with the law of nations, and existing treaties upon rights which we were bound to protect, combined with their attempts to excite insurrection in our own country, and followed by their declaration of war, render it evident that the French were the aggressors, and that Britain had a just RIGHT to go to war. The EXPEDIENCY of that measure, however, is a different question, and perhaps few subjects have occurred in political history, which have produced stronger arguments on both sides; in which men of the most patriotic hearts, and wisest heads, drew more opposite conclusions, according to the light in which they viewed this immense and complicated subject. Never was there a question in which candour, founded on cool and comprehensive reflection, examining the mass of evidence and reasoning on both sides, would more readily allow laudable and meritorious motives to total diversity of opinion and conduct. Yet never did there occur a contest in which party zeal generated more illiberal constructions, and more malignant interpretation of intentions.

France the aggressor.

THE

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Opinions and sentiments of different parties.

THE sentiments of Britons on the subject of the French revolution, may be divided into two classes; those who wished the establishment in England of a system resembling the French republic, to the utter subversion of the British constitution; and those who, varying in their plans and measures, desired the preservation of the British constitution. Most of the British democrats and jacobins were inimical to a war with France, because it interrupted the communication by which they expected to establish their favourite system; but some of them were said to have rejoiced at the hostilities, because they conceived war would excite such discontent as would lead to a revolution. But far was opposition to the war from being confined to democrats, jacobins, and the enemies of our polity. Of those who disapproved of hostilities, many, in the general tenor of their conduct, evinced themselves the firm friends of constitutional liberty, and monarchy. They sought the same ends, the preservation of the British constitution, and the maintenance of British security, but deemed them attainable by peace instead of war. The friends of the British constitution, both without and within parliament, for and against the war, in a great measure took the tone of opinions advanced and maintained by three of the highest parliamentary characters; Edmund Burke, Charles James Fox, and William Pitt. Burke continued to deem the French revolutionists, of every opinion, kind, and succession, the determined and inveterate enemies of religion, virtue, civilization, manners, rank, order, property, throughout the world; and eagerly and resolutely bent on disseminating disorder, vice, and misery; to regard them as pursuing these ends, not only in the ardent violence of infuriate passion, but also in the principled and systematic constancy of depraved, but energetic and powerful reason. He reckoned them totally incorrigible by any internal

Views of Messrs. Burke, Fox, and Pitt respectively on the French revolution, and the war with France.

nal means; and therefore strenuously inculcated an external force to overwhelm an assemblage of beings, who, in his estimation, unless conquered, would destroy and devastate mankind. Long before[m] the commencement of hostilities between France and Germany, he had suggested a confederation of the European powers for the subjugation of men whom he thought revolutionary monsters; and had uniformly written and spoken to the same purport. He eagerly promoted war, not merely for the purpose of procuring satisfaction for a specific aggression, which, in both plain and figurative language, he described as comparatively insignificant, but for the restoration in France of the hierarchy, aristocracy, and monarchy, the downfall of which was, he thought, the cause of French ambition and encroachment, menacing the destruction of all Europe. Mr. Burke desired war with the French revolutionists, to overthrow the new system, and to crush the new principles. Mr. Fox continuing to impute the increasing outrages of the new votaries of liberty to glowing enthusiasm, still conceived that the enthusiasm would subside if left to its own operation. External force, he predicted, would not only preserve, but increase the vehement heat, which might otherwise cool. The recent experience of the effects of the German invasion, confirmed him in this opinion. He thought that an attempt to force the establishment of monarchy, would drive France to become a military democracy: the project was unwise, because it was impracticable in its object, as well as pernicious in its means. Criminal, Mr. Fox said, as the French republicans were in their various confiscations and massacres, and in the murder of their king, their acts were no crimes against England; if the French nation choose to abolish existing orders, and to annihilate

Messrs. Burke and Pitt support the war on different grounds.

[m] See his posthumous works, memorial written in autumn, 1791.

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nihilate monarchy, they were not invading the rights of England; such a purpose of going to war was totally unjust; our efforts would spill the blood of our brave countrymen, would overwhelm us with additional debts; we might wage war year after year against France, as against America; we should make no progress, we should in the end be obliged to conclude a peace, recognizing the form of government which should then be established in France. The aggressions alleged against the French were too inconsiderable to justify war as a prudent measure, and if these were the sole causes of contest, they might be easily compromised, were Britain in earnest. We ought to receive an ambassador from the ruling powers of France, because they were the ruling powers.[n] With all foreign nations we considered neither the history of the establishment, nor the justice of the tenure, but the simple fact that the government with which we treated was established; such also was the conduct of other nations respecting England; France, Spain, and other monarchies, negociated with Cromwell; England ought now to pursue the same course: we ought to treat with those who possessed the power of doing what we wanted, as for the same reasons we frequently negociated with Algiers, Turkey, and Morocco, however much we reprobated their respective governments. Mr. Pitt was far from coinciding with Mr. Burke, in proposing to carry on a war for the restoration of the monarchical government. France had manifested schemes of unbounded aggrandizement, actually invaded our allies, and declared her resolution to encourage revolt in other countries. By the reciprocal action and re-action of her principles and power, she sought the unlimit-

[n] See speeches of Mr. Fox on war with France, in January and February 1793. Parliamentary Debates.

[o] See Mr. Burke's two memorials, written respectively in November 1792, and October 1793, published in his posthumous works; and also his regicide peace, wherein he severely censures the objects of the allies, and the little confidence they reposed in the emigrants.

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ed extension of both. Attacking us in such a disposition, and with such views, she compelled us to go to war for the repression of principles, and the reduction of power endangering our security. We ought not to recognize a government consisting merely of a faction, and not having the marks of probable stability, in the cool and deliberate approbation of the people. From a party so uncertain and changeable, we did not choose to receive a regular ambassador, as if it were firmly fixed in the supreme power; but we did treat with the existing government. The source of war was not our refusal to treat, as many believed, or pretended to believe, but the refusal of the French leaders to make satisfaction for injuries and insults. Not the restoration of monarchy in France, but the security of Britain, being our reason for going to war, we should carry on hostilities no longer than we were in danger from the conduct and dispositions of France. As the republicans and democrats in opposing the war, coincided with Messrs. Fox, Erskine, Sheridan, and other able men who were inimical to hostilities, on patriotic and constitutional grounds, many of the other party classed them, and more affected to class them, with democrats and jacobins. As on the other hand, the votaries of war were presumed, by its opponents, to seek the re-establishment of despotism in France, they were called crusaders against liberty. On the one side party zeal represented Messrs. Burke and Pitt, and their respective adherents, as the abettors of tyranny; on the other, Mr. Fox and his adherents as the abettors of jacobinism and anarchy. Impartial history, viewing the individual acts and chain of conduct of these three illustrious men, finds no grounds to justify so injurious an opinion; but the strongest reasons for concluding that they and their supporters and adherents, through different

The objects both of the ministerial party and opposition in parliament constitutional, though sought under different impressions, and by different means.

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ferent means, sought the same end, the constitutional welfare of their country.

1793.

Public opinion favourable to war with France.

MANY as were averse to war, both on the constitutional grounds of Mr. Fox, and on the unconstitutional grounds of democrats and jacobins, that great engine of politics in a free country, public opinion, was on the whole favourable to hostilities. A sense of the actual aggression of the French republic; but much more the alarming apprehension of French principles, rendered the country desirous of a total interruption of communication with France. It was not the war of the court, of the ministers, of the privileged orders; it was A WAR OF THE GREAT MAJORITY OF THE PEOPLE OF BRITAIN. IN DECLARING WAR AGAINST FRANCE IN FEBRUARY 1793, HIS BRITANNIC MAJESTY SPOKE THE VOICE OF THE BRITISH NATION.

In declaring war against France, the king spoke the voice of the nation.

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Objects of Britain — the repression of French principles, and the prevention of French aggrandizement. — Sir John Scott the attorney general introduces a bill for preventing traitorous correspondence — arguments for and against — modified, passes into a law. — Motion for peace. — Reasonings of Mr. Fox respecting the war and its probable effects. — The propositions are negatived by unprecedented majorities. — Mr. Sheridan proposes an enquiry into the alleged sedition. — His motion rejected. — Motion for parliamentary reform by Mr. Grey — arguments for. — Mr. Whitbread. — Arguments against. — Proposition reprobated as peculiarly unseasonable at such a period — and rejected. — State of commercial credit, and causes of its being affected. — Mr. Pitt proposes an advance of public money on the security of mercantile commodities. — The proposition is adopted, and revives mercantile credit. — East India company's charter on the eve of expiration. — Mr. Dundas presents a masterly view of the prosperity of India under the present system. — He proposes the renewal of the charter. — His plan is passed into a law. — Measures adopted to render British India farther productive. — Plan of agricultural improvement. — Sir John Sinclair — enquiries of in Scotland and England. — Result that agriculture is not understood and practised in proportion to the capability of the country — proposes the establishment of a board of agriculture — the proposal adopted. — Lord Rawdon's motion respecting debtors. — Increase of the army and navy. — National supplies. — A loan. — Taxes. — Session closes. — Commencement of campaign 1793. — French invade Holland — reduce Breda. — Hundart and Gertruydenburgh surrender. — Dumouriez besieges Williamstadt and Maestreight. — The British forces arrive in Holland. — The French raise the siege of Williamstadt. — Attacked by the Austrians at Winden — defeated. — French generals accuse each other. — Dumouriez evacuates the Netherlands — disapproved by the convention — privately proposes to make

peace with the allies and restore monarchy — suspected by the French government — summoned to return to Paris to answer for his conduct — sounds the dispositions of the army — finding them unfavourable, deserts to the Austrians.

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THE grand purposes of the British government, in its conduct respecting France, were to repress the operation of revolutionary principles in this country, and to prevent the French system of aggression and aggrandizement from being longer carried into successful execution on the continent. In this two-fold object originated the measures of external policy adopted by parliament during the remainder of the session, and also some of those that were confined to internal regulation.

1793. Objects of Great Britain — the repression of French principles, and the prevention of French aggrandizement.

WAR having been declared against a foreign country, it was obviously expedient to prevent correspondence between British subjects and the hostile party. To render this prohibition effectual, Sir John Scott, attorney-general, on the 15th of March introduced a bill for preventing, during the war, all traitorous correspondence with the king's enemies. The law of treason was founded upon a statute of the 25th of Edward III., which had been the subject of legislative exposition in different laws enacted since that period. The acts declared treasonable in that statute were principally reducible to two heads[a]; to compass, that is, to intend or project the king's death; to levy war against the king, and to abet or assist his enemies. Since that period, during wars, parliament had repeatedly passed laws which applied the general principle to the existing case; by specifically prohibiting adherence or assistance to nations at enmity with our[b] sovereign.

Sir John Scott, the attorney-general, introduces a bill for preventing traitorous correspondence.

[a] See vol. iii. 78.

[b] An act had passed in the reign of queen Anne, to prevent all traitorous correspondence, which prohibited any person from supplying the enemies with arms, naval or military stores, or from going out of the kingdom to the enemy's country without licence. A similar act of William and Mary had carried the regulation farther; it prohibited goods and merchandizes of ever sort. See Statutes at large.

Agreeably

Agreeably to the original statute, and the consequent explanatory acts the present bill was framed. Former laws had, in such circumstances, prohibited British subjects from sending military stores, arms, ammunition, and provision, of various enumerated kinds. The present bill, besides interdicting these articles, prohibited purchases of French funds or French lands. The reason of this prohibition was, that, as the French government proposed to carry on war against this country by the sale of lands, British subjects, if allowed to purchase such land, would not only feel an interest in the property which they had thus acquired, but furnish the enemy with the means of carrying on war against ourselves. It was further proposed that no persons should be allowed to go from this country into France, without a licence under his majesty's great seal; and that their neglect of this clause should be deemed a misdemeanour; and that no persons, though subjects of this country, coming from France, should be allowed to enter this kingdom without a passport or licence, or giving to a magistrate such security as he should require. The last regulation was to prevent the insurance of vessels which should traffic with France.

Arguments for and against.

The bill was opposed as inconsistent with the treason laws of Edward III., the principles of the British constitution, with justice and commercial policy. The provision against Englishmen returning to the country, was the bestowal of a power on the king to banish, during the war, every British subject now in France. Though he might return, in certain cases, by giving security, who were to be the judges of the amount of that security? This was to be left to a magistrate: here one man was to be put under the discretion of another, who might render his return impossible, by exacting security to an amount that could not be given. [c] The

[c] See speeches of Messrs. Erskine and Fox. Parliamentary Debates, 1793.

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restriction upon the purchase of lands was represented as extremely impolitic: it was alleged to be founded upon an absurd supposition, that Britons having here the most permanent security for their money, would send their capital to France, where they could have no security. Frenchmen, on the other hand, found property exposed to the revolutionary grasp in their own country; and, to escape spoliation, had sent many and large sums of money to Britain to be vested in our funds, and also great quantities of other precious moveables: as proscription advanced they must wish to send more to the place of safety. If the present regulation were adopted, France would no doubt follow the example: we should render her government the most essential service, by forcing Frenchmen to employ their money in their own funds. Instead, therefore, of preventing, as proposed, the efflux of money to the country of our enemies, we would prevent its influx into our own; and by the project of withholding resources from the enemy, we should add to his strnegth. The bill was defended as conformable both to the general law, and to special acts passed in periods of war. The particular provisions most strongly combated were supported as necessary in the precise and specific nature of the present war; the circumstances in which it was founded, and the projected resources of the enemy. After many debates, the two clauses most severely reprobated, concerning the return of British subjects, and the purchase of property in France, were abandoned. Undergoing these important changes, and several much less material modifications, the proposed bill was passed into a law.

Modified, it passes into a law.

Motions for peace.

REPEATED motions were made in the houses of parliament in order to procure peace. Of these the most important was a proposition of Mr. Fox, after the first successes of the allies, and the retreat of

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the French armies from the Netherlands.[a] Intelligence having arrived, that the French, leaving the scenes of recent invasion and aggression, had retired within their ancient frontiers; Mr. Fox, professing to consider the avowed objects of the war as now attained, proposed an enquiry into the reason of its continuance; and moved an adress to his majesty, praying him to make peace. Supposing, for the sake of argument, the present a just, prudent, and necessary war at the begining, he contended that the alleged reasons no longer existed. Holland, our ally, was not now exposed to any attack: France would willingly purchase peace by insuring the continuance of that safety, whereas he was afraid perseverance in carrying on war along with the combined powers, would again expose her to danger. The French had, no doubt, manifested designs of aggrandizement, but these had arisen from the successful repulsion of confederate attack. Besides, must England go to war with every continental power that perpetrates injustice? Was not the conduct of the partitioners of Poland equal in infamy and iniquity to the aggressions of France? Were the people of England to suffer all the miseries of war because the people of France were unjust, when that injustice, be it ever so atrocious, was violating no right of Englishmen? They had, indeed, threatened the security of his majesty's allies; but now confined within their own territories, they were occupied in defending their frontiers against the combined powers. The danger apprehended from their former conquest was no longer a subject of just uneasiness and alarm. The French were, at present, in great internal confusion and distress; and Britain could form no views of aggrandizement from the situation of her adversary. Even were justice and humanity out of the question, would po-

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Reasonings of Mr. Fox on the inexpediency of the war, and predicting its effects.

[a] The historical narrative of these events is somewhat subsequent: I here only mention a result on which Mr. Fox founded part of his reasoning.

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licy and prudence authorize this country to seize the possessions of France? What advantage could we derive from promoting the conquering and encroaching plans of other powers? Having driven France from the territories of her neighbours, for what purpose were we to persevere in a war, unless to invade her dominions? If we did make an inroad into her territories, could such a movement be to attain our professed objects, security and defence? By continuing the war we should manifest an intention of either dismembering her empire, or interfering with the government which her people chose to establish. These objects our government had uniformly disavowed, and the declared ends of hostilities had been compassed. The most favourable season for offering peace was in the midst of success; when the enemy were sufficiently humbled to feel the evils of war, without being driven, by the haughtiness of the conquerors, to desperate efforts, which might turn the tide of victory. Those, who calculated probable exertions of men fighting for conceived liberty and independence by the usual course of military events, fundamentally erred in expecting similar effects from totally dissimilar causes. Inspired by such animating motives, men had, in all ages and countries, displayed valour, prowess, and policy, astonishing to the rest of mankind. Pressed by continued and invading war, which excited such motives, the ardent spirit and inventive genius of the French would, Mr. Fox predicted, no less exert themselves; WE SHOULD DRIVE THEM TO BECOME A MILITARY REPUBLIC. Let us therefore endeavour, while opportunity was favourable, to procure an honourable and secure peace. To this a common objection is, With whom shall we treat? The answer is obvious: with any men who possess the power of doing what we want: the French are desirous of peace, and the present rulers are as competent to conclude peace as to carry

carry on war. Shall we be at peace with none whose form of government we shall not have previously approved? We have formerly made peace with tyrants; not because we approved their maxims and constitution of government, but because they had the power of making and observing conventions. Peace with any ruler or rulers implies approbation of their character no more than of their government. The French republicans have been guilty of cruelty and atrocious murders; so was Louis XIV. No British statesman refused to treat with the bigotted banisher of his most valuable subjects, nor with the sanguinary devastator of unoffending provinces. The statesman treats not with the virtue[e] but with the power of another party; and in expecting performance, looks for his best security, not in the integrity but the interest of the contractor. These were the aguments by which Mr. Fox inculcated the restoration of peace; and this was the strain of reasoning which he and other votaries of amity employed repeatedly at various stages of the contest.[f]

Messrs. Pitt and Burke oppose Mr Fox, on different grounds.

In opposing the address, Messrs. Burke and Pitt argued conformably to the different views which they had respectively adopted concerning the French revolution and the war. Mr. Pitt persevered in urging the impractibility of any treaty with the persons that at present exercised the government of France; and in supporting his position, exhibited a very eloquent view of their individual and collective atrocities: therefore he would not treat with them *now*. Reprobating the French principles as manifested in their present operation, he still disavowed every design of forcible interference in the internal government of France: he sought only security. This security was to be effected in one

[e] Parliamentary Debates, 17th June, 1793.
[f] See also his Letter to the electors of Westminster.

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of three modes: first, by obtaining an assurance that the principles should no longer predominate; secondly, that those who were now engaged in them should be taught that they were impracticable, and convinced of their own want of power to carry them into execution; or, thirdly, that the issue of the present war should be such as, by weakening their power of attack, should strengthen our power of resistance. Without these we might indeed have an armed truce, a temporary suspension of hostilities, but no permanent peace; no solid security to guard us against the repetition of injury and the renewal of attack. The present situation of affairs not being such, in Mr. Pitt's estimation, as to admit these means of obtaining security, he and his votaries opposed the address for the discontinuance of the war. Mr. Burke clearly and expressly combated the principle asserted by Mr. Fox, that England had no right to interfere with the internal government of France. If (he said) by the subversion of all law and religion, a nation adopts a malignant spirit to produce anarchy and mischief in other countries, it is the right of all nations to go to war with the authors of such attempts. In support of this doctrine he quoted the authority of Vattel, who lays down a position, "that if any nation adopt principles maleficent to all government and order, such a nation is to be opposed from principles of common safety." This was the spirit of France; and what was to keep the effects of it from England? War, and nothing else: therefore war with the French republic, *on account of her system and principles*, Mr. Burke recommended; and explicitly declared his opinion, that while the existing system continued, peace with France was totally inadmissible. The proposed address to the king was negatived by a majority equally great as that which had voted for the war; and throughout the nation perseverance in hostilities was as generally popular.

The propositions are negatived by unprecedented majorities.

MINISTERS,

MINISTERS, and many others who had been formerly inimical to their measures, having expressed their conviction that there existed in the country dispositions and designs to subvert the constitution, and to follow the example of the French innovators, Mr. Sheridan proposed that an enquiry should be instituted into the alleged sedition. He declared his disbelief of the ministerial representations upon any evidence that had been adduced, but avowed himself open to proofs, if such should be established: he therefore proposed a committee of the whole house to investigate the assertions, that it might be ascertained whether there was really a plot against the country, or if it was merely a false and mischievous report to impose on the credulity of the nation; to attach obloquy to the opponents of administration, and to facilitate the continuance of the war. In answer to Mr. Sheridan's requisition it was argued, that government had not asserted the existence of plots to be established by proof for judicial animadverision, but of a seditious spirit and operations, which required deliberative precaution and the most vigilant care to prevent them from maturing into plots and insurrections. From a combination of various and disconnected circumstances a man might receive a moral certainty of a general fact which ought to regulate his conduct, though he might have no proof of such a fact [g] sufficient to establish it before a magistrate. The active circulation of seditious writings, the proceedings and declarations of the innovating societies [h]; the public and avowed sentiments [i] of great numbers in favour of the French system as a model for this country, concurred in manifesting the existence of a spirit which

Mr. Sheridan proposes an enquiry into the alleged sedition;

[g] Mr. Windham's speech on Mr. Sheridan's motion, 4th March 1793. See Parliamentary Debates, [h] Ib. see ib.

[i] Speech of Sir James Sanderson the lord mayor. See ib.

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it became the legislature and government to repress; and Mr. Sheridan's motion was negatived by a very numerous majority.

his motion is rejected.

GREAT and powerful as the body was which now supported administration in both houses, the small band which in parliament abetted contrary measures was not discouraged from persevering in an opposition which appeared very unlikely to attain any of their objects in parliament; and out of parliament was not gratified by that popularity which has so often encouraged and elevated parliamentary minorities. Mr. Grey, agreeably to the intimation which he had given the preceding year in the house, and to the promise which he had made to the friends of the people, proceeded in his resolution to move a reform in parliament. Various petitions were presented to the house from inhabitants of towns, villages, and districts, both in England and Scotland, who joined for that purpose. Of these, some were moderate and respectful, but others wild and violent. One petition, of a very great length, was read from persons calling themselves *friends of the people* [k]: this representation, repeating the usual arguments, endeavoured to illustrate them by facts and instances [l]; and earnestly, though temperately, urged a change. Mr. Grey, having presented this petition, seconded its prayer by a proposition of parliamentary reform. Besides the usual arguments which on a subject discussed so often in parliament, must necessarily be repetitions, and personal ani-

Motion by Mr. Grey for parliamentary reform.

Arguments for.

[k] Not the association of which Mr. Grey was at the head, but a society that appears to have sprung from the addresses of that body.

[l] A work was published about this time, presenting an abstract of counties and boroughs, especially the latter, asserted to be in the nomination of peers, commoners, and the treasury, and not of the ostensible electors. The alleged result was, that seventy-one peers nominate eighty-eight, influence seventy-five; that the treasury nominate two, influence five; that ninety-one commoners nominate eighty-two, influence fifty-seven: that in England and Wales the whole number of members returned by private patronage amounted to three hundred and nine. See *Report on the state of the representation, published by the society of friends of the people.*

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madversions on the affirmed change of Mr. Pitt's conduct, Mr. Grey endeavoured to obviate objections to the seasonableness of the requisition. Forcibly urging the vast mass of influence which, though before known as a general fact, had never been so explicitly demonstrated by particular enumeration, he contended that the greater part of the influence in question was under the controul of ministers; that thence they had been enabled, at different periods of history, to establish systems and execute measures which were totally inconsistent with the country's good. Whatever evils did or might threaten our country, there was no preventive so certain, no safeguard so powerful, as a pure and uncorrupted house of commons, emanating fairly and freely from the people. The national debt, in its present accumulation, was owing to the corruption of parliament: had a reform in the representation of the people taken place at the conclusion of the peace of 1763, this country would, in all likelihood, have escaped the American war: if it had been accomplished last year, probably it would have saved us from our present distresses. If ever there was danger to be apprehended by this country from the propagation of French principles, the danger was now completely at an end. No set of Britons, without being bereft of their senses, could after recent events propose the French revolution as a model for British imitation. But were such principles ever to threaten danger, the surest way of preventing it from being serious was, by promoting the comfort and happiness of the people[m], to gratify their reasonable wishes, and to grant a parliamentary reform, which was so essentially necessary, and so ardently desired: the effectual preventive of violent and forcible altera-

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[m] Mr. Grey's speech on reform, 6th May 1793. See Parliamentary Debates.

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Mr. Whitbread.

tion was timely reform. This last position was still more warmly urged by Mr. Whitbread. Metaphysical opinions (he said) have never, in any instance, produced a revolution: the engine with which Providence has thought fit to compass those mighty events has been of a different description: the feelings of the governed, rendered desperate by the grinding oppression of their governors. What brought about that great event the reformation? Not the theories or speculations of philosophers, but the impolitic avarice and injustice of the church of Rome. What produced the catastrophe of Charles the First? What pruduced the revolution in this country? The oppressions of the executive government; and to the same cause America owes her freedom. Lastly, what produced the revolution in France? The misery of the people; the pride, injustice, avarice, and cruelty of the court.[n] The great characters who acted in these different scenes had but little power in producing their occasions. Luther, Cromwell, or Washington; the illustrious persons who appeared at the æra of the English revolution, or the wild visionaries of France, could never have persuaded the people to rise, if they had been unassisted by their own miseries and the usurpations of power. When the feelings of men are roused by injury, then they attempt innovations; then the doctrines of enthusiasts find ready access to their minds. This general reasoning was not controverted by the opposers of parliamentary change in the present circumstances. No one pretended to assert that seasonable reform was not better than perseverance in profligate corruption and tyrannical oppression; but the existence of these mischiefs was denied: no evil had been demonstrated that called for such a corrective. The persons associated to petition for a reform in parliament (their opponents said),

Arguments against.

[n] Mr. Whitbread's Speech on reform. See Parliamentary Debates.

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after a year's consideration, and, as it appears, repeated meetings, do not produce any specific plan whatever; it is therefore reasonable to infer, that they have not been able to ascertain the evil, much less to produce a remedy. The supporters of reform have asserted that the national debt originated in the corruption of parliament; and that a reform would have prevented the many burdensome wars in which this country has been engaged since the revolution. Instead of theory examine fact: all these wars have been agreeable to the people; the proposers and supporters of them spoke in unison with the sentiments of the people. Was not a great majority of the nation favourable to the wars of William and Anne, for humbling the pride and reducing the power of Louis XIV.? Was not the Spanish war of 1739 popular?—undertaken at the express requisition of the people, and even contrary to the known opinion of the government? Consider the war of 1756: was that unpopular? Never was any country engaged in a war more universally popular. The American war was equally approved by public opinion until within a year and a half of its conclusion: nothing could be more marked than the approbation which the public gave of that measure. No new system of representation could have spoken the voice of the people more plainly and strongly than the house of commons expressed it in approving these wars. That there might be improper influence in elections could not be denied; such influence, however, arose not from the political constitution, but from the imperfections, prejudices, and passions of human nature. If you are to reform, begin with moral reform[o]: but if political reform be wanted, this certainly is not the time to agitate subjects so likely to inflame the passions of the people, and

The proposition is reprobated as peculiarly unseason-

[o] The reasoning in the text is in substance taken from the speech of Mr. Jenkinson. See Parliamentary Debates, May 6th, 1793.

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able at such a period; and is rejected.

to excite a public ferment. Though there may be some defects, abide by the constitution rather than hazard a change with all the dreadful train of consequences with which we have seen it attended in a neighbouring kingdom. These arguments made a deep impression, and the proposition of Mr. Grey was rejected by a very great majority, as totally inadmissible in the present state of affairs, opinions, and sentiments.

State of commercial credit, and causes of its being affected.

ONE of the most important objects of parliamentary consideration during the present session was the state of mercantile credit. A spirit of commercial speculation and enterprize had been for some years increasing in every part of the kingdom, and was now risen to such an height, as to threaten public credit with a very serious danger. The circulating specie being by no means sufficient to answer the very greatly augmented demands of trade, the quantity of paper currency which was brought into circulation as a supplying medium, was so large and disproportionate, that a scarcity of cash was produced which threatened a general stagnation in the commercial world. In consequence of the distress and alarm which this stagnation had caused, Mr. Pitt proposed that a select committee should be appointed to enquire into facts, and explore their causes; and the subject being investigated, it was found that the embarrassments arose from the precipitation, and not the inability of British merchants. The multiplication of paper currency, and scarcity of coin, induced banks and bankers to suspend the usual discounts in expectation of which, merchants had formed engagements that were far from exceeding their property, but in the present state of pecuniary negotiation, surpassed their convertible effects. To extricate commercial men from these difficulties, Mr. Pitt proposed that government should advance money on the security of mercantile commodities, by is-

Mr. Pitt proposes an advance of public money on the

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suing exchequer bills, to be granted to merchants, on the requisite security, for a limited time, and bearing legal interest. Opposition expressed their apprehensions that the proposed mode would be ineffectual, that the failures arose from the present ruinous war, and that every remedy but peace would be futile. The projected plan, besides, would open a path to the most dangerous patronage, since government could afford or withhold the accommodation according to the political conduct of the applicant. These objections being over-ruled, the bill was passed into a law; the temporary embarrassment was removed; and manufactures and trade again became flourishing.

security of mercantile commodities.

The proposition is adopted, and revives mercantile credit.

ANOTHER subject, of the highest commercial magnitude, at the same time occupied legislature. The charter of the East India Company being on the eve of expiration, a petition for its renewal was presented to parliament; and on the 23d of April the subject was taken into consideration. The very general reception of Smith's commercial philosophy, especially his doctrine of free trade, and the known admiration in which Mr. Pitt, and many of his coadjutors and votaries held the popular system of political economy, had given rise to expectations and apprehensions that the exclusive privileges of the East India merchants would last no longer than the period which was pledged by the public faith. Many supposed that the commercial monopoly would be for ever destroyed, and that the trade to India would be opened to the whole energy of British enterprize. To scrutinize this subject was the peculiar department of Mr. Dundas; and though thoroughly acquainted with the views of theoretical economists, that able minister regarded the question as a practical statesman. Without undertaking to controvert the doctrines of speculative writers concerning

East India Company's charter on the eve of expiration.

Mr. Dundas presents a masterly view of the prosperous state of India under the present system.

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cerning the productive efficacy of a free trade, or even denying the probability of its profitable effects, if extended to our intercourse with India, he laid down a sound and prudent proposition, that legislators ought not rashly to relinquish a positive good in possession for a probable good in anticipation. The advantages which experience had proved to accrue from the present system were immense, varied, and momentous. The shipping employed by the East India Company amounted to 81,000 tons; the seamen navigating those ships were about seven thousand men, who had constant employment: the raw materials imported from India, for the use of the home manufactures, amounted annually to about 700,000*l.* British commodities annually exported to India and China, in the company's ships exceeded a million and a half sterling, including the exports in private trade which were allowed to individuals. The fortunes of individuals annually remitted from India amounted to a million. "The industry of Britain thus, (said Mr. Dundas) on the one hand, is increased by the export of produce and manufactures, and the consumption of those manufactures enlarged by the number of persons returning with fortunes from India, or who are supported by the trade and revenues of India; and on the other, it is fostered and encouraged by the import of the raw materials from India, upon which many of our most valuable manufactures depend. So that, on the whole, the trade adds between six and seven millions to the circulation of the country. Such is the benefit accruing from the monopoly of the company, exercised under the controul of the legislature. The experience of nine years has justified this system! British India is in a state of prosperity which it never knew under the most wise and politic of its ancient sovereigns. The British possessions, compared to those of the neighbouring states in the peninsula,

peninsula, are like a cultivated garden contrasted with the field of the sluggard. [p] The revenues of India have been increased, and the trade connected with them is in a state of progressive improvement. A necessary war has been conducted with vigour, and brought to an honourable and advantageous conclusion. A system so effectually conducive to all its important purposes; the prosperity of Britain, the welfare of India, its internal good government, and security from foreign aggressors, ought still to be supported. The benefits to be derived from a free trade may be still greater; but they must be contingent, whereas the present are certain. Before a change can be digested and executed many great difficulties are to be surmounted. Would it not create an interruption in the discharge or liquidation of the company's debts? Would it not derange the regular progress of their increasing commerce? and would there not be a serious danger, that while these innovations were proceeding, rival European powers might seize the occasion, renew their commercial efforts, and divert into a new channel those streams of commerce, which render London the emporium of the Eastern trade? On these principles, illustrated through a vast variety of important detail, he moved that the company's monopoly should be continued, under the present limits, for twenty years. He farther proposed regulations tending to promote a free trade, which should not interfere with the company's charter, and should embrace only such articles as did not employ the capital and enterprize of the East India Company, that should bring this surplus commerce into the ports of London instead of the continent of Europe, to which it had been chiefly diverted. [q] The most important measure which he proposed

He proposes the renewal of the charter.

[p] See Parliamentary Debates, April 23d, 1793.

[q] See Sir George Dallas's letter to Sir William Pulteney, in which the origin,

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proposed for this purpose was, that the company should annually provide three thousand tons of shipping for conveying to and from India such exports and imports as it did not suit themselves to include in their own commercial adventures, that thus British sailors might be employed in this private trade instead of foreign sailors; and British subjects might be enriched by this employment of British capital instead of aliens. After considerable discussion, the plan of Mr. Dundas was digested into a law; the charter was renewed, and the clauses respecting the promotion of free trade inserted into the act.

This plan is passed into a law. Measures adopted to render India farther productive.

Plan of agricultural improvement.

WHILE commercial arrangements so much occupied the attention of our statesmen and lawgivers, a kindred subject was submitted to their consideration. Agriculture has never occupied a share of legislative attention proportioned to its momentous value as a branch of political economy, since Britain became so eminent for manufactures and commerce. This is an omission the consequences of which have been often fatally experienced from recurring scarcity in a country, by the fertility of its soil and the talents of its people, so adapted for securing plenty. An evil so frequent was naturally the subject of reiterated complaint; but no effectual measures were employed to prevent it from often occurring again. Among the many ardent enquirers into political economy, one of the most active and indefatigable whom an age supremely addicted to such studies has produced, is Sir John Sinclair. This gentleman, of a vigorous and acute understanding, enriched with knowledge and methodized by erudition, had bestowed great industry of research on various branches of political philo-

Sir John Sinclair.

origin, history, and nature of this free trade is very ably explained; and the means of making it to centre in British ports is clearly demonstrated.

sophy.

sophy. He had traced, investigated and presented to the public, the history of revenue. In the progress of his pursuits, agriculture presented itself to him as an object most deserving of promotion. He saw that very much remained to be done; but before he could set about propositions of improvement, he thought it wisest and most expedient to ascertain the facts; and therefore sought information where useful information was most likely to be found. In Scotland, his native country, he applied himself to the clergy, the best informed of any class of men of fixed rural [r] residence, and addressed certain queries to the members of that numerous and respectable body. These queries, embracing the physical, moral, religious, and political situation of the respective parishes, in the result of the answers produced an immense body of statistical knowledge; especially on pastoral and agricultural subjects. He afterwards, less systematically and extensively executed, through different means, a similar plan in England. He advanced, however, so far as to ascertain a general fact, of the very highest importance; that though in some particular districts improved methods of cultivating the soil are practised yet in the greater part of these kingdoms, the principles of agriculture are not yet sufficiently understood; nor are the implements of husbandry, or the stock of the farmer, brought to that perfection of which they are capable. To promote so desirable a purpose, Sir John Sinclair projected the establishment of a board of agriculture, to be composed of gentlemen perfectly acquainted with the subject, and considerably interested in the success

Enquiries of in Scotland,

and England.

Result, that agriculture is not understood and practised in proportion to the capability of the country—

proposes the establishment of a board of agriculture.

[r] From the towns also the reports were extremely valuable; but these were not all executed by clergymen. The most important—the account of the city of Edinburgh, came from the pen of Mr. Creech; and with the state of the metropolis, very happily united the progress and variation of national manners.

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of the scheme, and who should act without any reward or emolument. An address was proposed to the king, praying him to take into his royal consideration the advantages that might accrue from such an institution. His majesty directing the establishment of the board; the commons voted the necessary sums for defraying the expences, and the board of agriculture was accordingly established.[s]

The proposal is adopted.

CERTAIN districts of Scotland, on the coast, were molested with heavier duties upon coals than other parts of the country. This evil had been often and strongly stated in the statistical reports; and the duty actually amounted to a prohibition. In the North of Scotland, from the high price of coals, the people were obliged to trust almost entirely to their peat mosses for a supply of fuel. In preparing this article a large portion of the labour of that part of the country was expended, which might be beneficially employed in fisheries and manufactures, and by this means a great part was lost to the revenue, which would have arisen from the industry of the inhabitants. For these reasons Mr. Dundas proposed the repeal of the duties in question; and that the revenue might not suffer, he moved certain imposts upon distilled spirits, which, enhancing the price of the article, would benefit health and preserve morals. A petition was presented by the cities of London and Westminster, praying for a repeal of a duty upon coals: in the reign of queen Anne a tax of three shillings per chaldron had been imposed upon imported coals, and the amount was to be applied to the building of fifty-two churches.[t] The duty afterwards had been employed in the maintenance of the

[s] See Otridge's Annual Register, 1793, chap. iv.

[t] This was a quite different impost from that of Charles II. of five shillings per chaldron, now enjoyed by the Duke of Richmond.

clergymen

clergymen of those churches; and lastly, was made a part of the consolidated fund; and ministers alleging it was no longer a local tax, prevailed on the house to reject the petition. Among the classes of subjects who applied for relief this season were the catholics of Scotland: the Lord Advocate stated on their behalf, that his majesty's catholic subjects in Scotland were at present incapacitated by law either from holding or transmitting landed property, and were liable to other very severe restrictions; which could not now be justified by any necessity or expediency. He therefore proposed a bill to relieve persons professing the catholic religion from certain penalties and disabilities imposed on them by acts of parliament in Scotland, and particularly by an act of the 8th of King William: the bill being introduced, was without opposition, passed into a law.[u]

Law for the relief of Scottish catholics.

LORD RAWDON this year presented a bill for the relief of insolvent debtors, and for amending and regulating the practice with regard to imprisonment for debt. The bill was a compound of that humanity and discrimination which has been already noticed in this benevolent and able character. His lordship deemed the law of imprisonment for debt to be founded in principles at once rigorous and absurd: it was rigorous, because it exacted from the victims of its operation, while doomed to inaction, that which, in the free exercise of their faculties, they were not able to perform; and was absurd, because ineffectual to its avowed purpose; for it was calculated to defeat, not to attain, its object. If the debtor be guilty of a fraud, said his lordship, punish him as a fraudulent agent; if not guilty of a fraud, do not punish insolvency as a crime, which should rather be commiserated as a misfortune: to punish insol-

Motion of Lord Rawdon for the relief of debtors and satisfaction of creditors.

[u] Acts of parliament, 33 of Geo. III.

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vency as criminal, and to doom fraud to the same punishment as mere insolvency, is to confound all moral distinctions. As the law now stands between debtor and creditor, in the very commencement of an action the fundamental principle of justice is violated. What is the great object of the institution of government, but to prevent individuals from being even the judges, far more the avengers, of their own wrong? Yet, by the existing laws of the land, the creditor is enabled to deprive the debtor of his liberty upon a simple swearing to the debt. The proposed bill, however, for the present, did not intend a general change of the law which he reprobated as so severe and unjust: what he now desired was a modification of arrests and of bail, so as to prevent oppression and distress for inconsiderable sums. The bill was opposed by Lord Thurlow and by others, as striking at the whole system of the law of England; and the Lord Chancellor proposed that it should be referred to the judges to examine the state of the debtor and creditor laws, to consider the subject, and prepare a bill to be introduced early the next session: Lord Rawdon agreeing, it was, for the present, withdrawn.

Increase of the army and navy. National supplies. Loan and taxes.

THESE were the principal subjects that came before parliament this session, except the supplies. The army and navy were increased to a war establishment, and a considerable body of Hanoverian troops was employed in the service of Britain. Besides the ordinary national funds, a loan of four millions five hundred thousand pounds was required. The high estimation in which the minister stood with the monied capitalists induced the public to expect that the loan would have been negotiated on very favourable terms: but the stagnation of mercantile credit was felt by the minister as well as others who had occasion to borrow money. There was actually a great scarcity of cash, and the public

was

was obliged to pay a premium of eight per cent. For defraying the interest of the loan the provisions were, ten per cent. on assessed taxes; an additional duty upon British spirits, on bills, receipts, and on game licences. On the 21st of June the session was closed by a speech in which his majesty expressed the highest satisfaction with the firmness, wisdom, and public spirit, which had distinguished the houses during so very important a session, and testified his approbation of the successive measures which they had adopted for the internal repose and tranquillity of the kingdom; for the protection and extension of our commercial interests both at home and in our foreign dependencies, and for their liberal contributions towards those exertions by which only we could attain the great objects of our pursuit, the restoration of peace on terms consistent with our permanent security, and the general tranquillity of Europe. The signal successes with which the war had begun, and the measures that were concerted with other powers afforded the most favourable prospect of a happy termination to the important contest in which we were engaged. *

Session closes.

HAVING brought the parliamentary history of this session to a close, the narrative now proceeds to military transactions, some part of which passed at the same period; including certain events to which allusion has already been necessarily made.

Campaign of 1793.

FROM the disposition of their forces the French were enabled first to commence hostilities; and as soon as war was declared against Great Britain and the States General, Dumouriez proposed to invade the United Provinces. There the democratic party, which, as we have seen, the aristocratical faction had cherished and abetted to co-operate in their enmity to the house of Orange, still subsisted.

* State Papers, June 21st, 1793.

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Though cautious in their proceedings since the re-establishment of the stadtholder, they were increasing in number and force from the Belgian commotions, and still more from the French revolution; especially after the republicans had become masters of the Netherlands. With the disaffected Dutch Dumouriez maintained a close correspondence, carried on chiefly by emigrant Hollanders assembled at Antwerp: these, formed into a kind of Batavian committee, were the channels of communication between the Gallic leaders and the malcontents residing within the united provinces. The malcontents recommended eruption into Zealand, but the general himself thought it more advisable to advance with a body of troops posted at Mordyck, and masking Breda and Gertruydenburg on the right, and Bergen-op-Zoom, Steenberg, Klundert, and Williamstadt, on the left, to effect a passage over an arm of the sea to Dort, and thus penetrate into the very heart of Holland.[y] The design was adventurous, but not unlikely to succeed, if executed with such rapidity as to anticipate the arrival of assistance from England. The army which Dumouriez commanded on this occasion consisted of twenty-one battalions, which, including cavalry and light troops, amounted to about thirteen thousand men. He was accompanied by the skilful engineer D'Arcon, who had invented the floating batteries at the siege of Gibraltar, and a considerable number of Dutch emigrants. A proclamation was published, inveighing against the English government and the conduct of the stadtholder, and calling upon the Dutch to assist their democratic brethren in destroying the power of their aristocratic tyrants.[z]

The French invade Holland. Breda,

On the 17th of February the French army entered the territories of the States General. Breda being invested surrendered by a capitulation, in which it

[y] Memoirs of Dumouriez.

[z] State Papers, February 1793.

was

1795.

was stipulated, that the garrison should retain their arms, and continue to fight for their country during the war. On the 26th Klundart opened its gates to the French army; and on the 4th of March, Gertruydenburg having stood a bombardment of three days, surrendered. The same terms were granted to these two fortresses as to Breda. The strength of the captured towns was so great, that military critics, convinced they might have resisted much more effectually, did not hesitate to conclude that their easy submission arose from treachery. Dumouriez now proceeded towards Williamstadt. While he was himself making such progress on the left, General Miranda, advancing on the right, invested Maestreicht with an army of twenty thousand men. Having completed his works, he summoned the garrison to surrender; but the prince of Hesse, commander of the fortress, refused to capitulate, and avowed his determination to defend such an important post to the last extremity. The French general bombarded as well as cannonaded the town; while, on the other hand, the besieged made two sallies, though without material success. General Miranda continued his investment of Maestreicht; and a covering army of French was encamped at Herve under the command of general Valence. Meanwhile general Clairfait, with the Austrian army, having crossed the Roer, attacked the French posts on the 1st of March, and compelled the army to retreat as far as Alderhaven, with the loss of two thousand men, twelve pieces of cannon, thirteen ammunition waggons, and the military chest: the following day the archduke attacked several French batteries, and took nine pieces of cannon. On the 3d of March the prince of Saxe Cobourg obtained a signal victory over the [a] French, and drove them from Aix la Chapelle even to the

Klundart, and Gertruydenburg surrender.

Dumouriez besieges Williamstadt and Maestreicht.

[a] New Annual Register 1795, p. 159.

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vicinity of Liege, with the loss of four thousand killed, one thousand six hunded prisoners, and twenty pieces of cannon. In consequence of this defeat of the covering army general Miranda raised the siege of Maestreicht. Dumouriez, following the career of his successes in the west, laid siege to Williamstadt, and to Bergen-op-zoom [b]; but the course of his victory was arrested; for now he had a new enemy to encounter in the British army.

The British forces arrive in Holland.

THE first object of the British military plans for this campaign was the defence of Holland, and a body of troops was in February sent, consisting of about six thousand British, commanded by the duke of York. A brigade of British guards was thrown into Williamstadt, who animating the Dutch to vigorous defence, and leading their efforts, made so gallant a resistance, that Dumouriez saw that perseverance would be unavailing; he therefore raised the siege, ordered his troops to retire from Bergen-op-zoom, evacuated the towns and forts which had surrendered, and returned to take the command in the eastern Netherlands, where the declining fortunes of the French required the presence of an able general. The Austrians had continued advancing to Brabant; and several skirmishes of posts had taken place, in which the Germans were generally superior. On the morning of the 18th of March, an engagement commenced at Neer Winden, on the confines of Brabant and Liege. General Dumouriez attacked the centre of the imperial army with great vigour, but suffered a repulse; and he yielded to the same superior efforts from the imperial right wing. In the afternoon, however, the French right wing gained some advantage; but the corps de reserve, commanded by general Clairfait, decided the day. The army of Dumouriez retreated for some time in good order,

The French raise the siege of Williamstadt.

They are attacked by the Austrians at Neerwinden, and defeated.

[b] See Dumouriez's Memoirs.

but

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but were at length entirely routed by the Austrian cavalry. The slaughter was great; the French lost four thousand men, and soon after six thousand deserted to the enemy. The French generals, by mutual crimination, endeavoured respectively to remove from themselves the blame of disaster. Dumouriez imputed the defeat to general Miranda, who, he asserted, both fought feebly, and fled unnecessarily. In his memoirs, indeed, he admits that general La Marche committed the first error, by an injudicious movement which threw his troops into confusion; but Miranda is the subject of his principal censure.[c] Miranda, on the other hand, imputes the discomfiture to treachery on the part of Dumouriez.[d] But wherever the blame lay, if there was any, the battle of Neer Winden decided the fate of the Belgian Netherlands. The Austrians continued to pursue the republicans; on the 21st, Dumouriez judged it proper to take post nearer Louvain, and on the following day he was attacked by the enemy. The action was bloody, and lasted the whole day; but the Imperialists were compelled to retreat with great loss: the Austrians, however, rapidly advancing in other quarters, the French general judged it expedient to evacuate all his conquests, and re-enter France. Dumouriez thoroughly knew the disposition of the convention; and foreseeing the fate which the suspicious republicans prepared for a vanquished general, he resolved to make his peace with the allies, to march with his troops against Paris, there to effect a counter-revolution, and re-establish monarchy. On this subject he conversed with colonel Mack, an Austrian officer of great eminence; and it was agreed that the Imperial troops should act merely as auxiliaries for the attainment of this object; and should remain on the

French generals accuse each other.

Dumouriez evacuates the Netherlands.

He privately proposes to make peace with the allies, and restore monarchy.

[c] See Dumouriez's Memoirs.

[d] In a letter to Petion, dated 21st March, 1793.

frontiers,

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frontiers, unless he wanted their assistance. If Dumouriez should find it impracticable to effect a counter-revolution without the aid of the Austrians, then he should indicate the number and kind of troops of which he should stand in need to execute his design. The Austrian forces to be furnished in that event, should be entirely under the direction of Dumouriez.

He is suspected by the French government, and summoned to return to Paris, to answer for his conduct.

The executive government suspecting the dispositions of Dumouriez, sent deputies to investigate his conduct. Confident of the assistance of his army, he did not disguise from them his project to annihilate the national convention, and fix a king upon the throne. Informed of his design, the convention sent commissioners to supersede his command, and summoned him to appear at Paris to answer for his conduct. Dumouriez ordered these delegates to be seized, and conveyed to general Clairfait's head quarters, to be kept as hostages for the safety of the royal family.

He sounds the disposition of the army; but finding them unfavourable, deserts to the Austrians.

But the army soon shewed the vanity of Dumouriez's expectations; they not only refused to follow him to Paris, but gave him reason to doubt his personal security; and he was compelled to seek safety by flight. Having reached the imperial territories, he had an interview with colonel Mack, and with the prince of Saxe Cobourg. Two proclamations were digested, one by Dumouriez himself, the other by the prince of Saxe Cobourg. The manifesto of general Dumouriez contained a recapitulation of his services to the French republic; a statement of the cruel neglect which his army had experienced in the preceding winter, and of the outrages which were practised by the Jacobins towards the generals of the republic, and particularly himself. It states the reasons why he arrested the commissioners; exhibits a vivid picture of the evils which might be apprehended from the continuance of the anarchical system in France; and expresses his confident expectations, that as soon as the Imperialists entered the territory

of France, not as vanquishers, and as wishing to dictate laws, but as generous allies, come to assist in re-establishing the constitution of 1790, great numbers of the French troops would join in promoting so necessary a purpose. He protested upon oath, that his sole design was to re-establish constitutional royalty; and that he and his companions would not lay down their arms until they had succeeded in their enterprize. These protestations, interspersed with a considerable portion of gasconading promises which he could not perform, and threats which he could not execute[e], constituted the declaration. A manifesto[f] was also published by the prince of Saxe Cobourg, announcing that the allied powers were no longer to be considered as principals, but merely as auxiliaries in the war; that they had no other object but to co-operate with general Dumouriez, in giving to France her constitutional king, and the constitution she formed for herself. He pledged himself that he and his army would not enter the French territory to make conquests, but solely for the end now specified. He declared farther, that any strong places which should be put into his hands, should be considered as sacred deposits, to be delivered up as soon as the constitutional government should be established in France, or as

[e] In the last paragraph, in which he introduces his oath under the head "I *swear* (he says) that we will not lay down our arms until we shall have succeeded in our enterprize; and our sole design is to re-establish the constitutional royalty; that no resentment, no thirst after vengeance, no ambitious motive, sways our purposes; that no foreign power shall influence our opinions; that wherever anarchy shall cease at the appearance of our arms, and those of the combined armies, we will conduct ourselves, as friends and brothers; that wherever we shall meet with resistance, we shall know to select the culpable and spare the peaceable inhabitants, the victims of the infamous wiles of the jacobins of Paris, from whom have arisen the horrors and calamities of the war; — that we shall in no way dread the poignards of Marat and the Jacobins; — that we will destroy the manufacture of these poignards, as well as that of the scandalous writings by which an attempt is made to pervert the noble and generous character of the French nation; — and finally, in the name of my companions in arms, I repeat the oath, that we will live and die free. The general-in-chief of the French army, Dumouriez. See State Papers, 1793.

[f] See State Papers, April 5th, 1793.

soon

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soon as general Dumouriez should demand them to be ceded. It was at this period that Mr. Fox [5] and many others thought that the combined powers might have proposed such terms of peace to France, as would have been accepted with equal readiness and gratitude. The allies, it was alleged by the votaries of peace, ought to have declared themselves to the national convention to the following purport. Arrange your internal government according to your own inclinations: the present confederacy is formed for purposes of defence, not of aggression; we shall not therefore interfere in the constitution of France. We only desire you to re-establish the ancient boundaries of the Netherlands, to restore your other conquests; to liberate the queen and the royal family; and to allow the emigrants a moiety of their property: we will then withdraw our forces, and be your friends. Had such propositions been made, these politicians affirmed that a stop might have been immediately put to the effusion of blood; and that France would at this time have been under a regular and established government, and Europe would have been at peace.

Hypothetical reasonings on the practicability and expediency of peace at this period of victory to the confederates.

It is difficult to say with any degree of probability, what would have been the result in a very problematical question, of an experiment that never was tried. The probable success of such an attempt proceeded upon an assumption that either the French were not originally the aggressors; or, if the beginners of the war, were from recent discomfiture tired of its continuance. Perhaps if the offer had been made in their present circumstances they might have received it with delight; and for a time have continued pacific; but afterwards might have resumed invasion, when the confederation was broken. But it belongs not to history to state pos-

[5] It was in consequence of the present posture of affairs, that he made the motion for peace, which has been already mentioned in the parliamentary history.

sible,

sible, or even probable consequences, which might flow from measures that were not adopted. If as some able statesmen argued, the hour of victory was the hour of offering peace, the confederates against France were of a totally different opinion. They conceived France to have been the aggressor; to have manifested views of ambitious aggrandizement; that it was the policy of her neighbours to prevent her encroachments, and in her present condition to reduce her strength so as effectually to prevent the future accomplishment of her projects; that therefore they ought now to press upon her in her weakened state. On this view they regulated their policy, and formed their plan of the rest of the campaign. A congress was held at Antwerp, wherein representatives attended from the several powers that formed the combination, which had now been joined by Spain and Naples. At this congress were present the prince of Saxe Cobourg, counts Metternich, Starenberg, and Mercy d'Argenteau, with the Prussian, Spanish, and Neapolitan envoys. It was determined that the fortresses on the frontiers of France should be invested by the armies of the confederates, that the enemy's coasts should be beset on every side by the fleets of the maritime powers, and that every encouragement and practicable assistance should be afforded to the royalists within France. [h] A second proclamation was now published by the prince of Saxe Cobourg, annulling the first, and declaring a design of keeping whatever places he should capture, for the indemnification of his sovereign. Dumouriez, when he was informed of this change in the Imperial system of military operations, declared to the prince de Cobourg, that he could not with honour serve against France. Receiving a passport, he therefore retired into Germany. [i]

[h] New Annual Register, 1793.

[i] He first came over into Britain, but was desired by ministers to quit the

By

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By the plan of operations concerted for attacking the frontiers of France, the British, Dutch, Austrian, and Prussian troops were to press on to the Netherlands; an army of Prussians and other Germans from the Rhine. Joined to the confederate armies were great bodies of emigrants, commanded by the princes of the blood, and other refugees of high rank and distinction. The chief part of the exiles was attached to the army of the Netherlands; and on all sides dispositions were made for invading the French dominions.

kingdom; and in his visit nothing passed of any historical importance. See Annual Register, 1793.

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